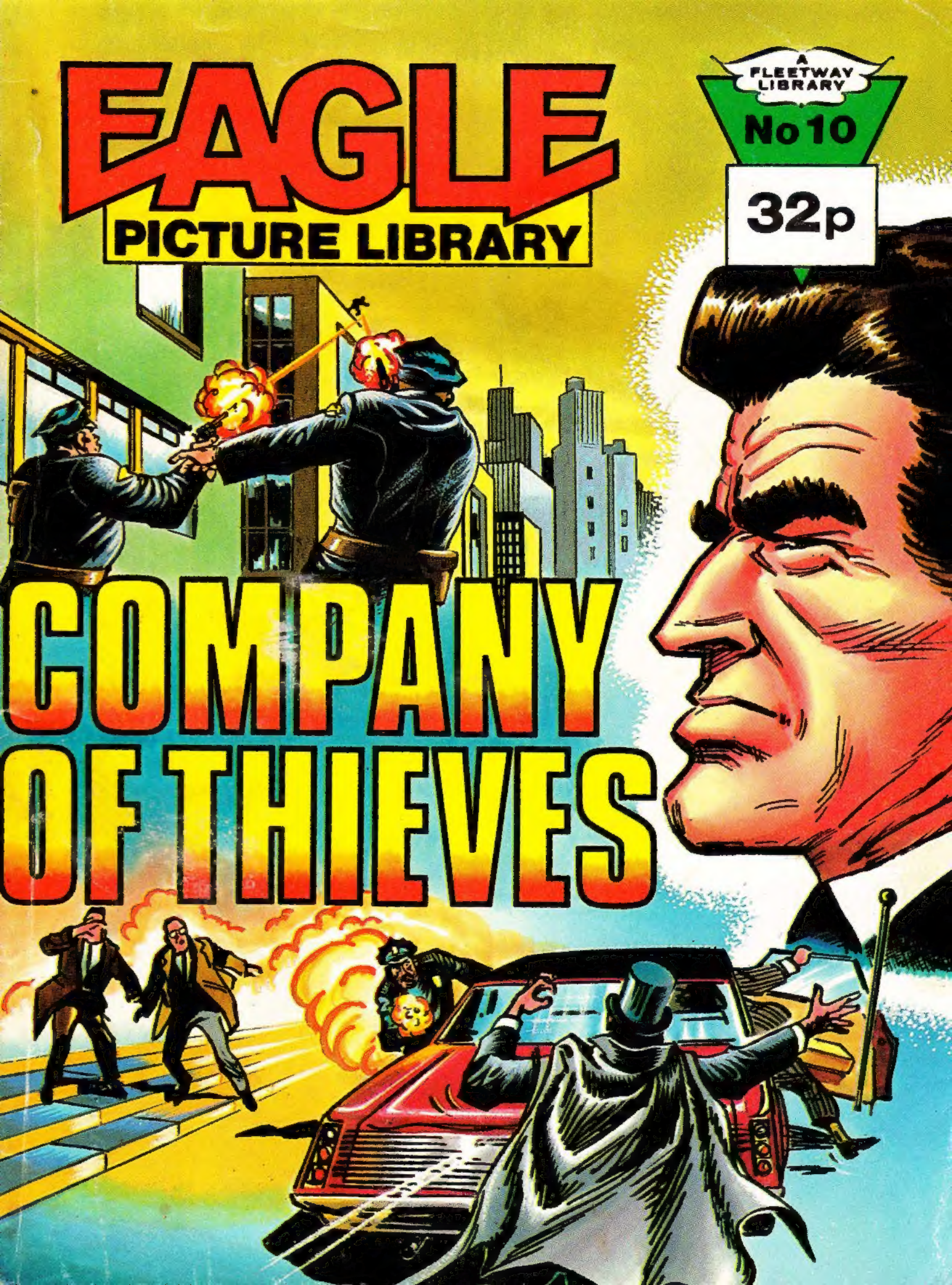
EAGLE

PICTURE LIBRARY

A FLEETWAY LIBRARY

No 10

32p



COMPANY OF THIEVES

THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO ENJOY IN THE NEW-LOOK...

IT'S NINE POWERFUL STORIES MAKE IT THE BEST COMIC READ FOR BOYS OF ALL AGES!

ON SALE EVERY MONDAY Price 24p

9 FANTASTIC STORIES!

EAGLE and TIGER

24p Australia 65c. New Zealand 65c. Malaysia $1.60.

Dan Dare

EATEN ALIVE!

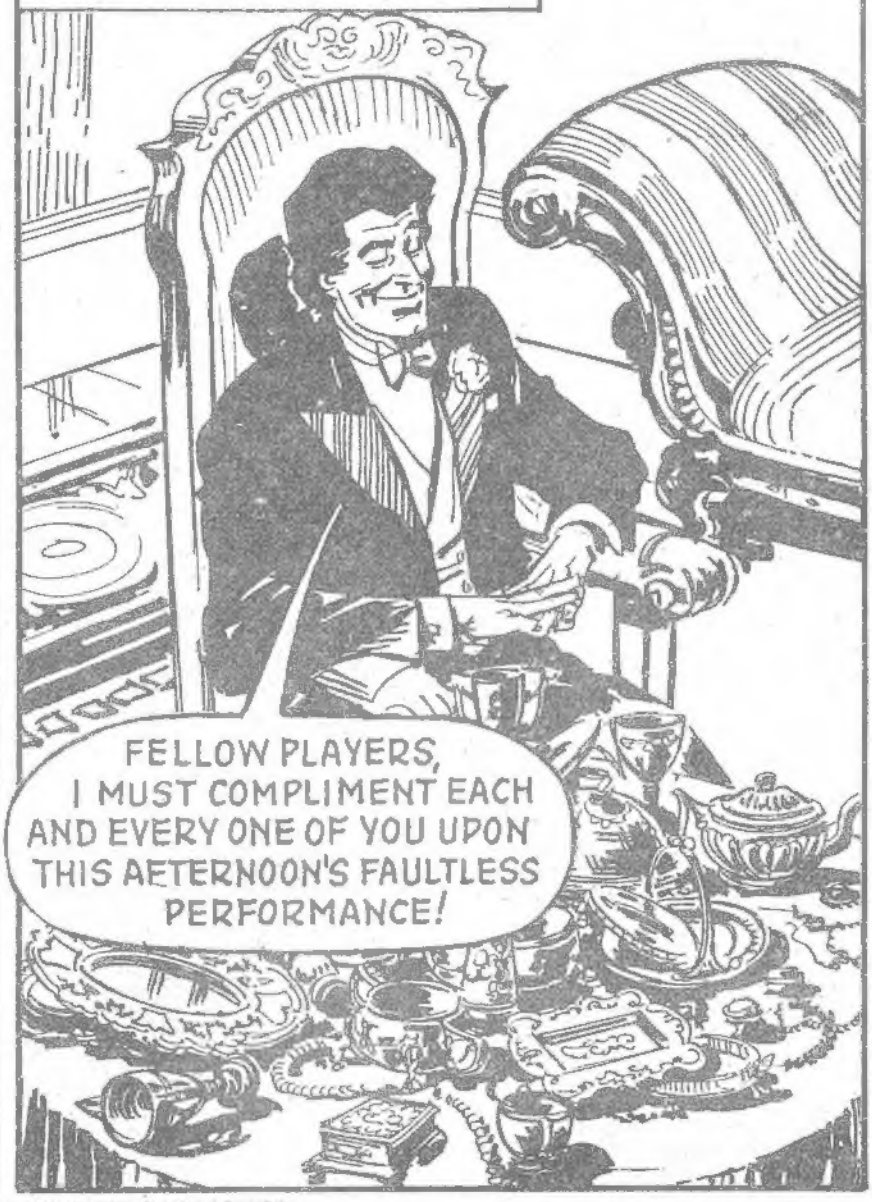
See story on centre-pages

PLUS A DOOMLORD DIES!

AND MAX WANTS TO BE A SPY!

COMPANY OF THIEVES

IRVING THESPIUS, ACTOR AND ILLUSIONIST, HAD TURNED TO CRIME TO PUT HIMSELF BACK IN THE PUBLIC'S EYE—AND WITH SPECTACULAR SUCCESS...

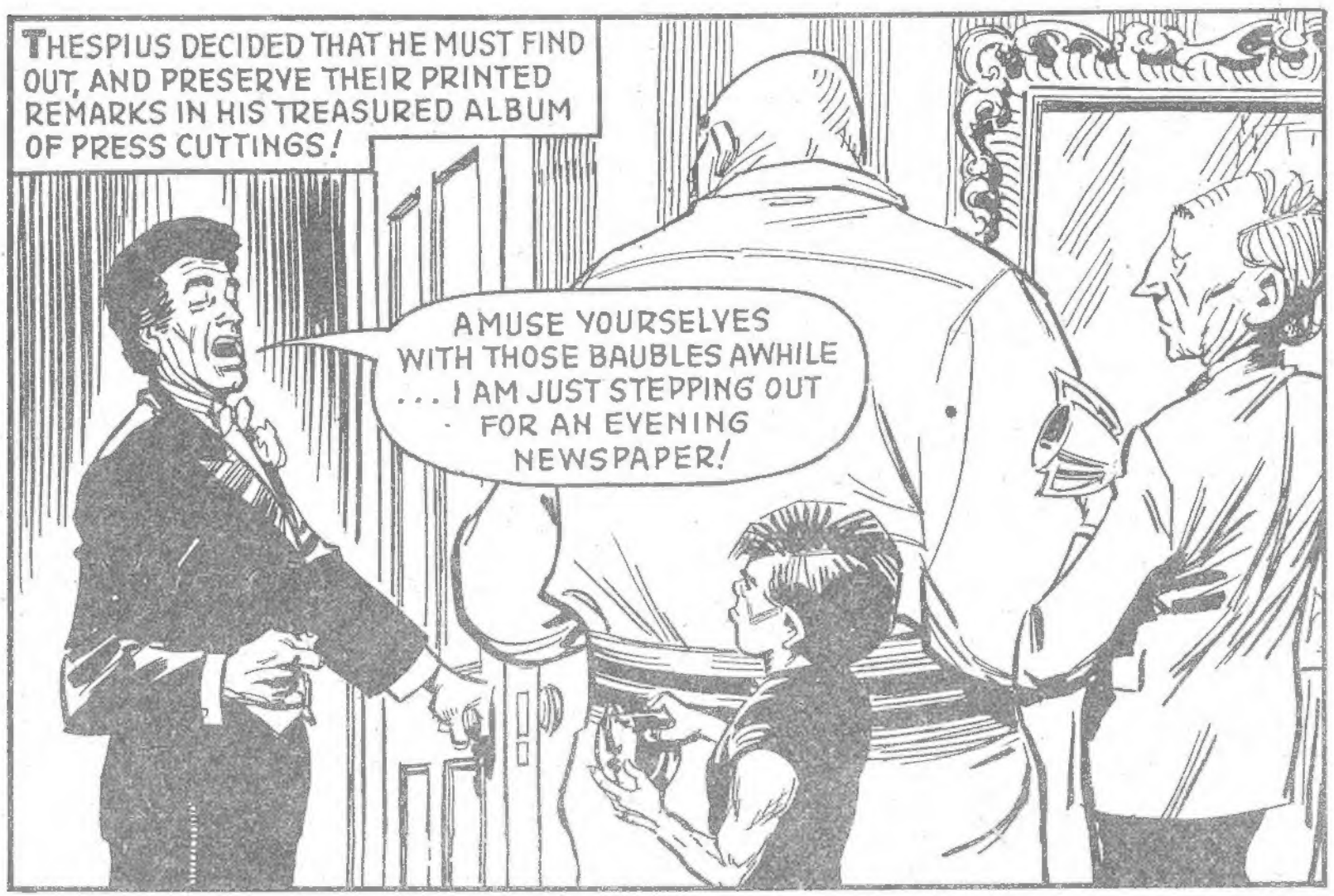


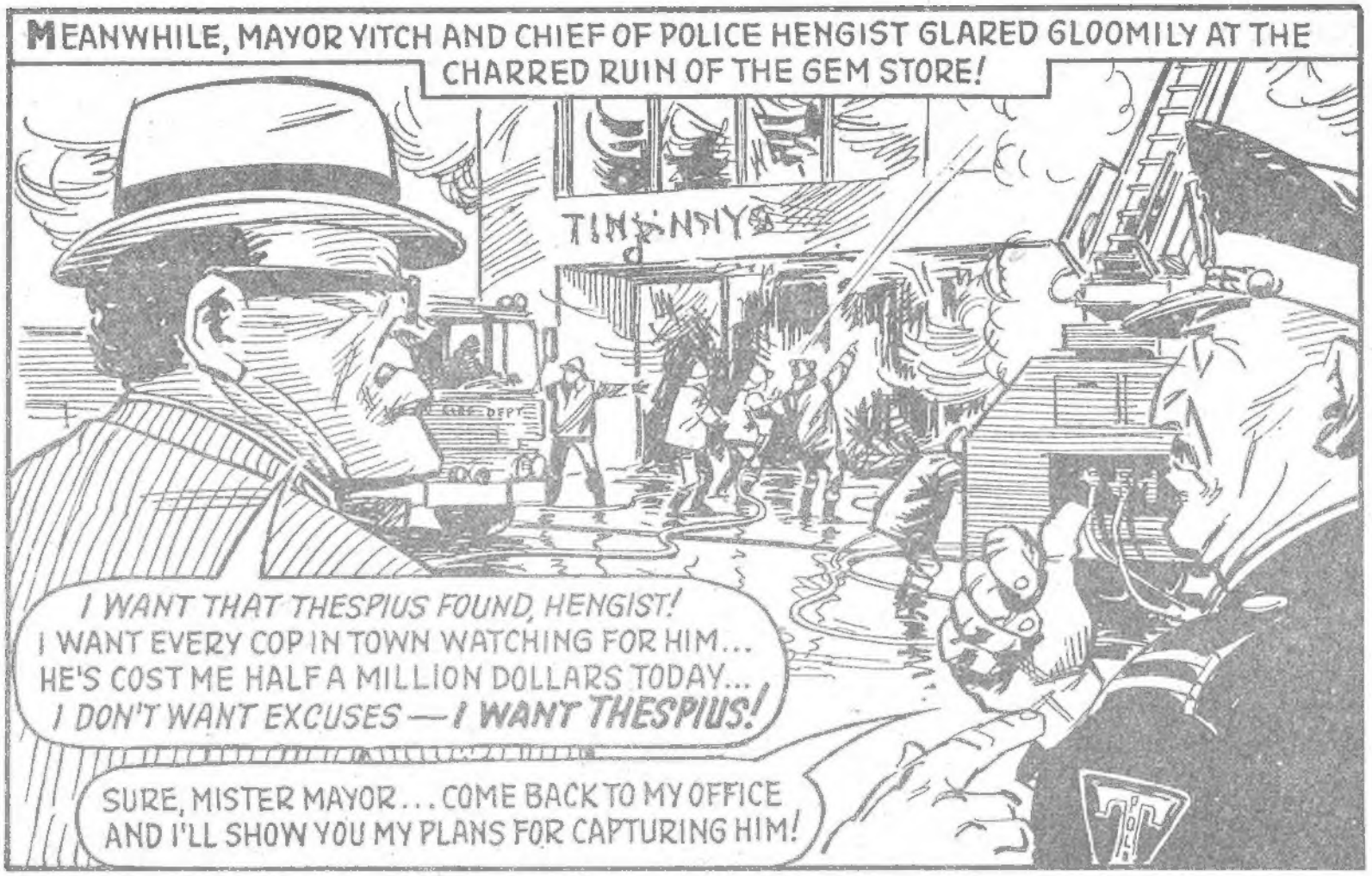
© IPC Magazines Ltd., 1985

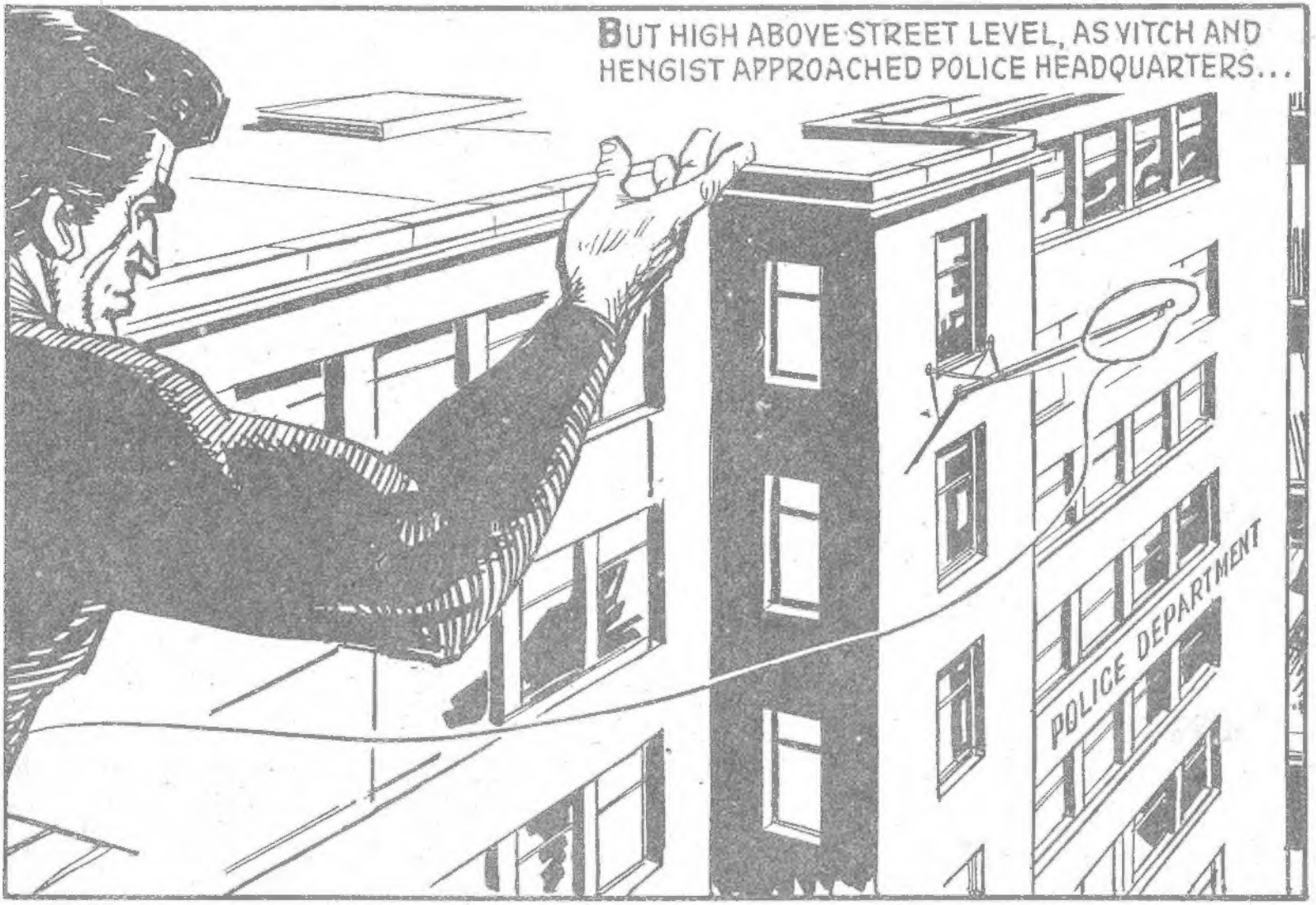
EAGLE P.L. 10

PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED

THAT PERFORMANCE HAD ENTAILED ROBBING THE CITY'S LARGEST GEM STORE—A STORE OWNED BY THE MAYOR. . .
I WONDER WHAT THE NEWSPAPER CRITICS THOUGHT OF IT!


THESPIUS DECIDED THAT HE MUST FIND OUT, AND PRESERVE THEIR PRINTED REMARKS IN HIS TREASURED ALBUM OF PRESS CUTTINGS!
AMUSE YOURSELVES WITH THOSE BAUBLES AWHILE . . . I AM JUST STEPPING OUT FOR AN EVENING NEWSPAPER!


MEANWHILE, MAYOR YITCH AND CHIEF OF POLICE HENGIST GLARED GLOOMILY AT THE CHARRED RUIN OF THE GEM STORE!
I WANT THAT THESPIUS FOUND, HENGIST! I WANT EVERY COP IN TOWN WATCHING FOR HIM... HE'S COST ME HALF A MILLION DOLLARS TODAY... I DON'T WANT EXCUSES — I WANT THESPIUS!
SURE, MISTER MAYOR... COME BACK TO MY OFFICE AND I'LL SHOW YOU MY PLANS FOR CAPTURING HIM!

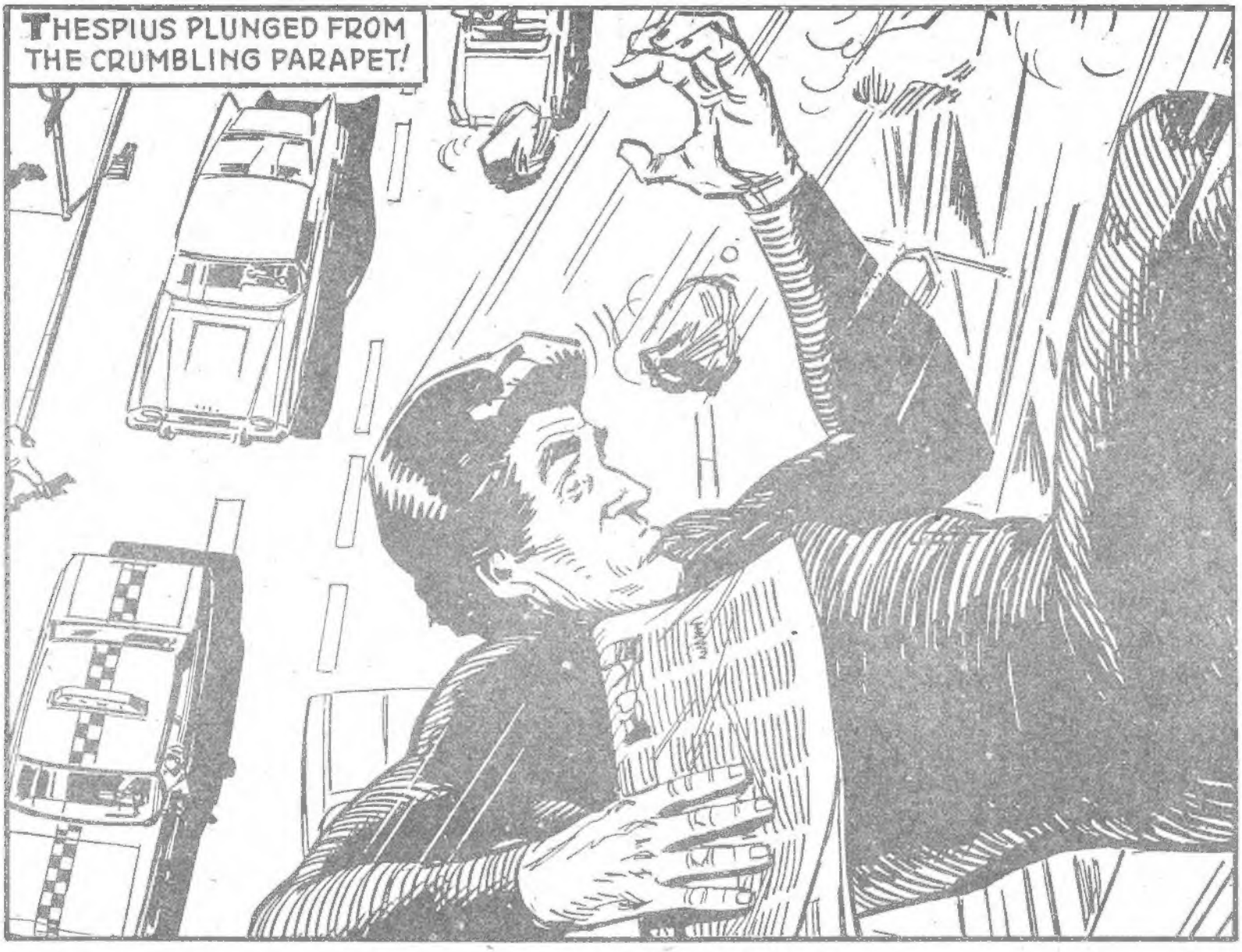

BUT HIGH ABOVE STREET LEVEL, AS YITCH AND HENGIST APPROACHED POLICE HEADQUARTERS...
POLICE DEPARTMENT

YOUR NEWSPAPER, CHIEF HENGIST!
YOU'VE GOT NO TIME TO READ THAT! YOU'VE GOTTA CATCH THESPIUS!
I KEEP TELLING YOU, MAYOR, I'VE GOT MEN EVERYWHERE! THAT CRAZY FELON COULDN'T STEAL A FIVE CENT PIECE WITHOUT GETTING NABBED!
... THANKS, CHIEF! SORRY I DON'T HAVE THE FIVE CENTS FOR THE PAPER ON ME RIGHT NOW!

SO HE COULDN'T STEAL FIVE CENTS, EH? HE'S JUST STOLEN YOUR NEWSPAPER!

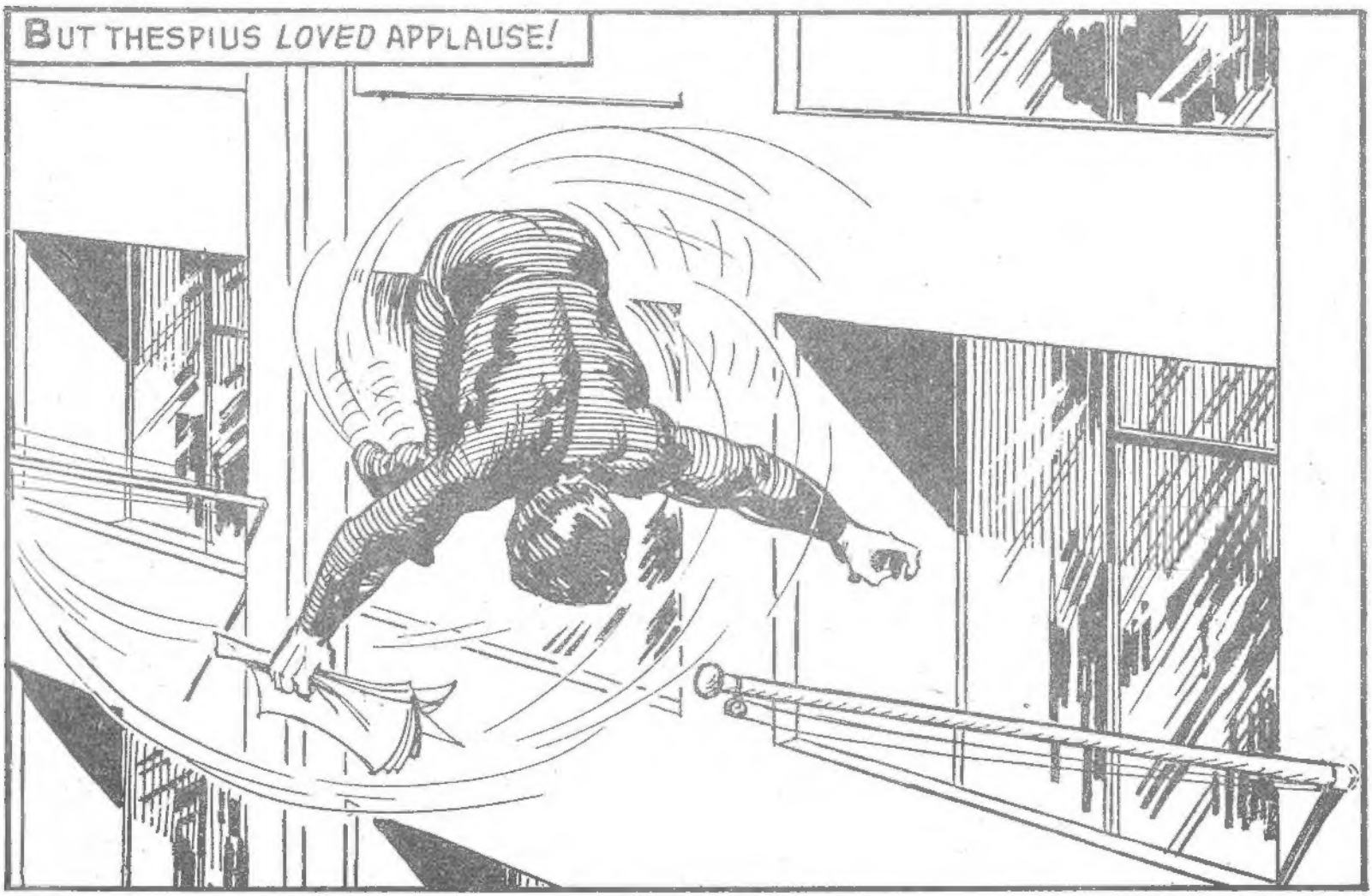
DON'T JUST STAND THERE, YOU DUMB COPS! GET AFTER THAT GUY!
SURE, CHIEF! YOU GIVE US WINGS AND WE'LL FLY!

YOU DON'T NEED WINGS! YOU'VE GOT GUNS... SO USE 'EM!
THERE WAS PERIL INDEED FOR THE GREAT THESPIUS... NOT FROM THE OUT-OF-RANGE BULLETS ... BUT FROM CRUMBLING STONEWORK!
AAAARH!


THESPIUS PLUNGED FROM THE CRUMBLING PARAPET!

BUT THIS MAN OF MANY PARTS HAD ONCE BEEN A DARE-DEVIL TRAPEZIST!
OOOOOOH! HOW ABOUT THAT?

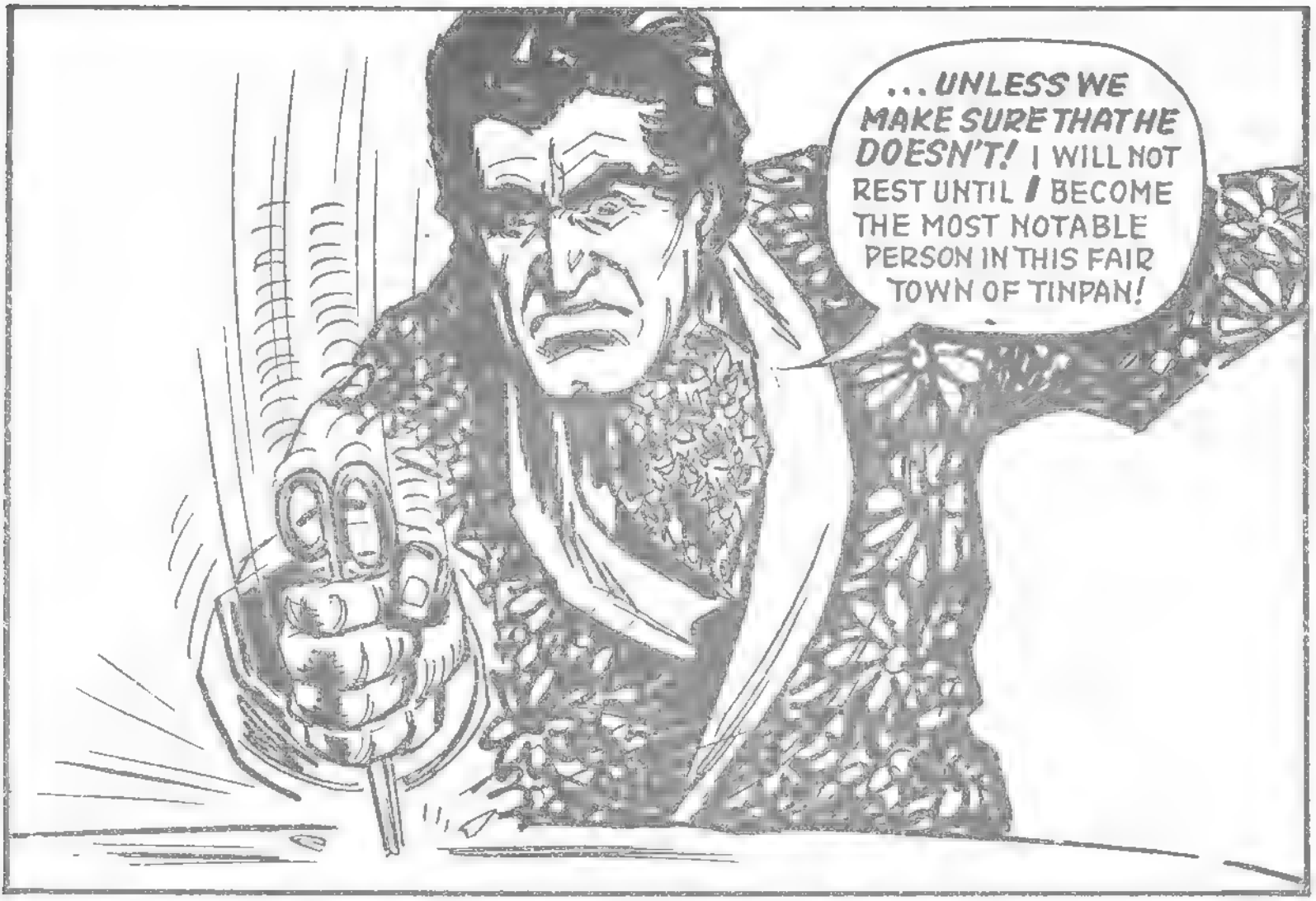
A SPONTANEOUS HAND-CLAPPING CAME FROM THE SPELLBOUND CROWD. THE CROOKED MAYOR VITCH TURNED PURPLE!
DON'T CLAP HIM... SHOOT HIM!

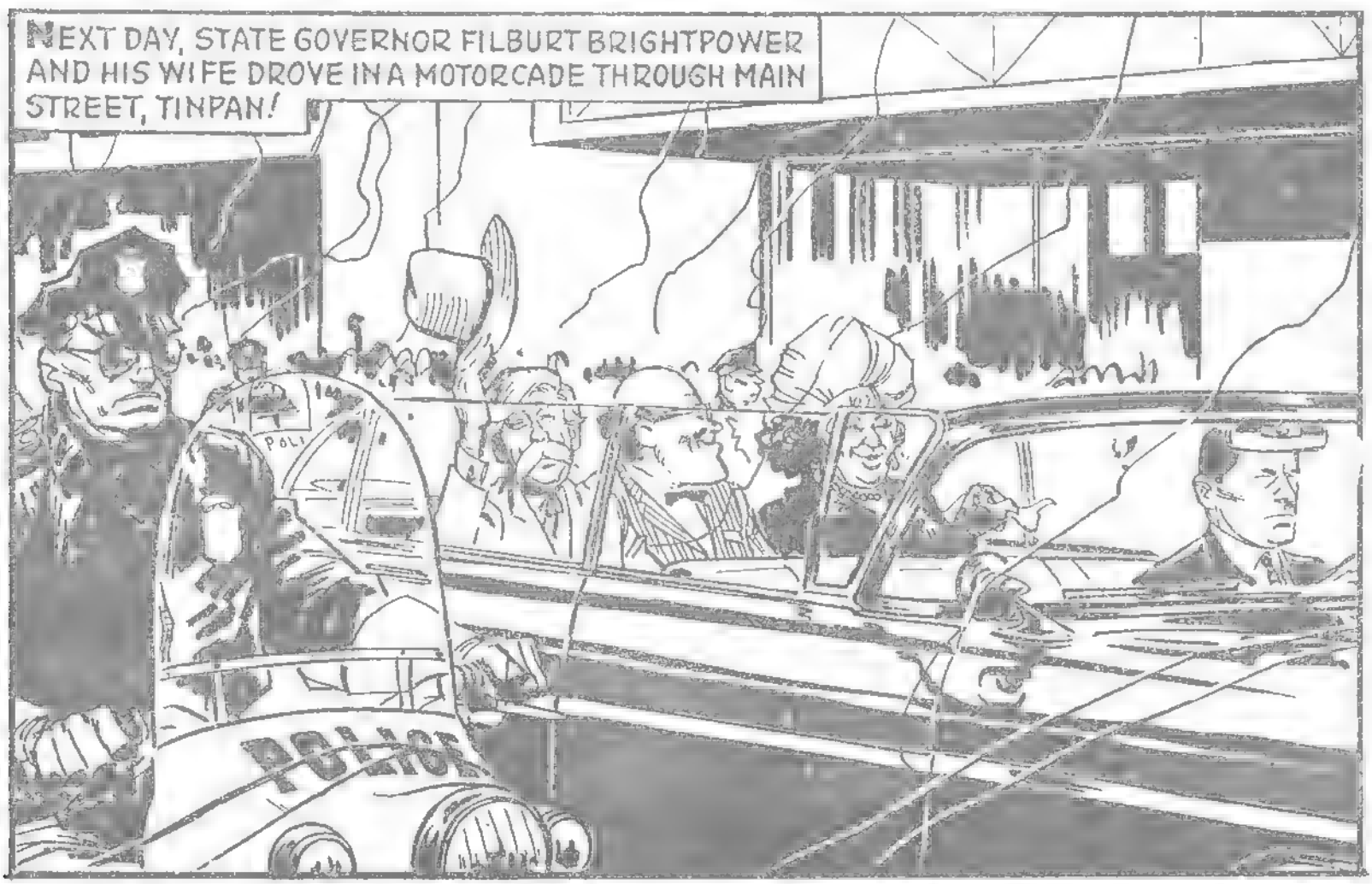

BUT THESPIUS LOVED APPLAUSE!

SAY, THIS IS TERRIFIC . . . I'VE SEEN NOTHING LIKE IT EVEN IN A THREE RING CIRCUS!
HOW CAN YOU HIT A GUY WHO WON'T KEEP STILL?
THESPIUS' FINELY-JUDGED DESCENT WAS INTO THE HOTEL GARDEN . . .
PARDON MY INTRUSION... I DO NOT INTEND TO TARRY LONG!
EEEEK!

THESPIUS HAD LEFT BEFORE THE POLICE FOUND THEIR WAY INTO THE GARDEN. SOON HE WAS SAFELY IN HIS HIDE-OUT, READING THE STOLEN NEWSPAPER AND SURROUNDED BY HIS "TROUPE" . . .
WHAT MAGNIFICENT COVERAGE THE PRESS HAVE GIVEN ME TODAY... I SHALL DEVOTE ONE WHOLE PAGE OF MY ALBUM TO THIS SPLENDID REPORT!
BUT SUDDENLY A SMALL ITEM CAUGHT HIS EAGLE EYE!
WHAT IS THIS... DO I PERCEIVE THAT CRAVEN, CIVIC CROOK VITCH CREEPING INTO THE NEWS AGAIN..?

THE ITEM CONCERNED A VISIT OF THE STATE GOVERNOR, SENATOR FILBURT BRIGHTPOWER AND HIS WIFE ... TO A CIVIC WELCOME AND LUNCH ORGANISED BY VITCH!
I WON'T ALLOW IT... CRINGELIN!
N-NO, MASTER!
YOU KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN, DON'T YOU, MINIM?
NO, MASTER!
VITCH WILL SNITCH THE NEWS HEADLINES TOMORROW... UNLESS...


...UNLESS WE MAKE SURE THAT HE DOESN'T! I WILL NOT REST UNTIL I BECOME THE MOST NOTABLE PERSON IN THIS FAIR TOWN OF TINPAN!

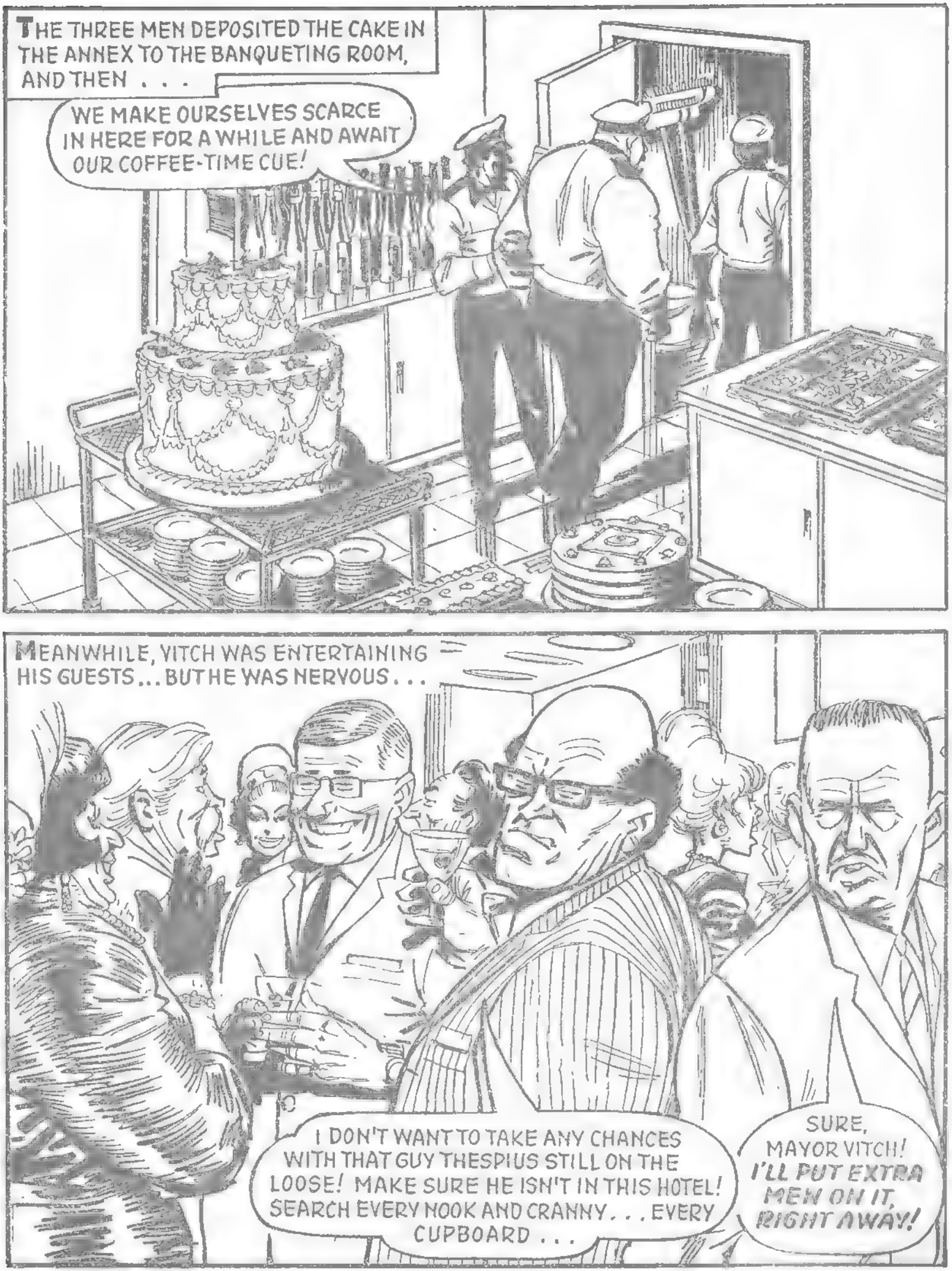

NEXT DAY, STATE GOVERNOR FILBURT BRIGHTPOWER AND HIS WIFE DROVE IN A MOTORCADE THROUGH MAIN STREET, TINPAN!
POLI
POLICE

SOME DISTANCE AWAY ON A DERELICT BUILDING . . .
AHA, YES . . . THE SHOW HAS BEGUN! LET US PREPARE FOR OUR ENTRANCE! Y'KNOW, I CAN ALMOST SEE THE GLITTER OF MRS. BRIGHTPOWER'S JEWELLERY FROM HERE!

AND SO . . .
IN YOU GO, MINIM!
MY COSTUME, CRINGELIN . . . MY COSTUME!
STAR BAKER
I HAVE IT HERE, MASTER!

AND MINUTES LATER, THE DELIVERY VAN ARRIVED AT THE REAR OF THE SAVELOY-MILTON HOTEL . . .
SERVICE EN
DELIVERIES OF
STORE
WHILST AT THE FRONT ENTRANCE . . .
SAY, I JUST LOVE THIS LITTLE TOWN YOU HAVE HERE, MAYOR VITCH . . . AND ALL THESE WONDERFUL PEOPLE!
THANK YOU, MRS. BRIGHTPOWER!
I DO HEAR YOU HAD SOME TROUBLE YESTERDAY!

THE SENATOR WAS OBVIOUSLY REFERRING TO THESPIUS' EXPLOITS!
JUST A LITTLE TROUBLE, GOVERNOR... BUT ALL IS UNDER CONTROL. YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FOR YOURSELVES OR YOUR WIFE'S JEWELLERY... NOT EVEN A MOUSE COULD GET INTO THIS RECEPTION UNINVITED!
MAYBE AN UNINVITED MOUSE COULD NOT ENTER THE SAVELOY-MILTON HOTEL ... BUT THE GREAT THESPIUS COULD!
WHY YOU BRING DAT T'ING IN 'ERE?
A LAST MINUTE ORDER FROM MAYOR VITCH HIMSELF... HE WANTS IT TAKEN IN WITH THE COFFEE ... IT'S A SURPRISE FOR THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE!


THE THREE MEN DEPOSITED THE CAKE IN THE ANNEX TO THE BANQUETING ROOM, AND THEN . . .
WE MAKE OURSELVES SCARCE IN HERE FOR A WHILE AND AWAIT OUR COFFEE-TIME CUE!
MEANWHILE, VITCH WAS ENTERTAINING HIS GUESTS... BUT HE WAS NERVOUS . . .
I DON'T WANT TO TAKE ANY CHANCES WITH THAT GUY THESPIUS STILL ON THE LOOSE! MAKE SURE HE ISN'T IN THIS HOTEL! SEARCH EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY . . . EVERY CUPBOARD . . .
SURE, MAYOR VITCH! I'LL PUT EXTRA MEN ON IT, RIGHT AWAY!

THESPIUS, AND HIS TALENTED ASSISTANTS, TROMSO AND CRINGELIN, WERE FOR THE MOMENT HIDDEN IN A BROOM CUPBOARD . . .
HOW MUCH LONGER DO WE WAIT IN HERE, MASTER?
AH, HAVE PATIENCE, TROMSO! THE WAITING TIME BEFORE THE 'CURTAIN-UP' IS ALWAYS ONE OF TENSION!

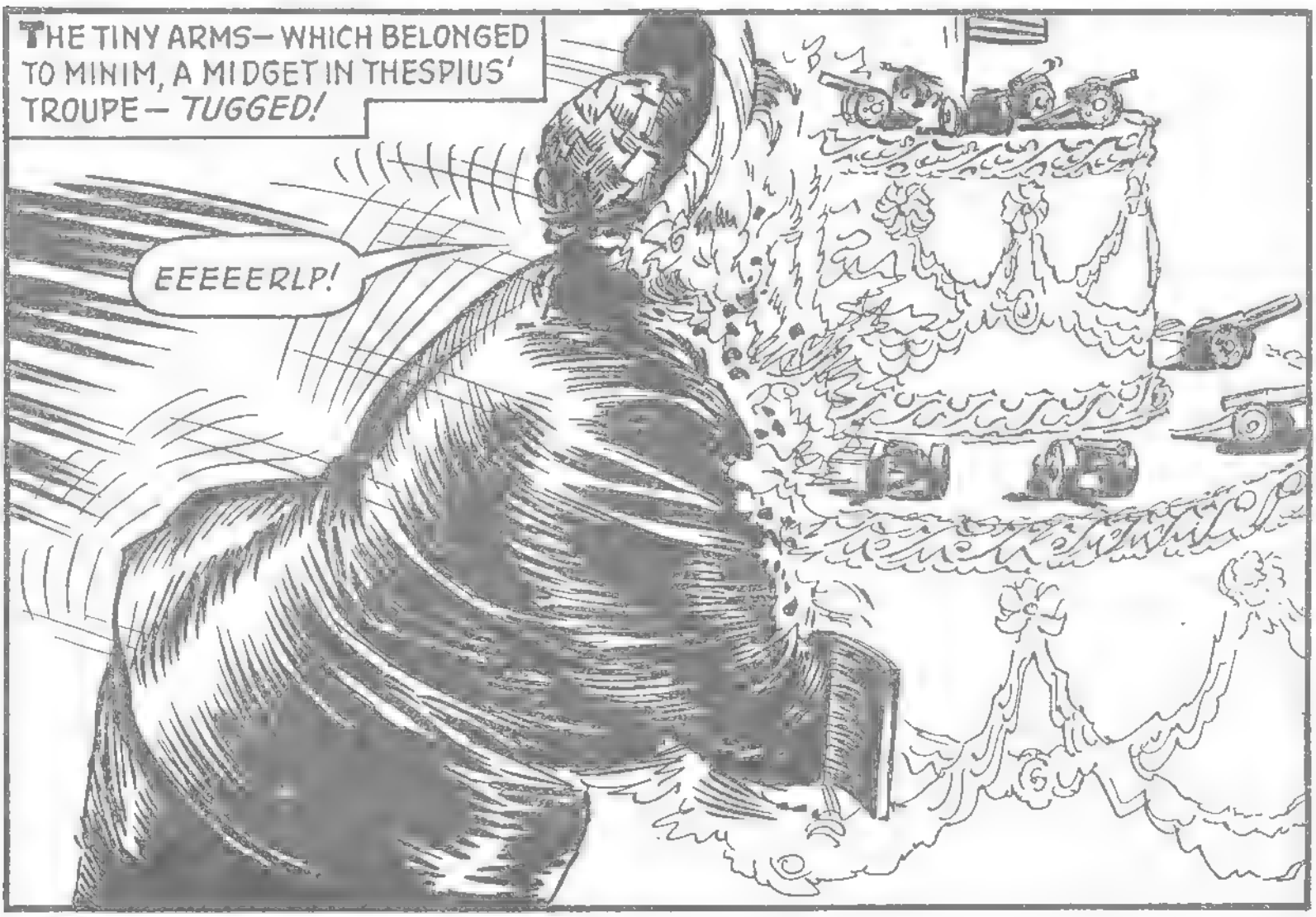
THE POLICE SEARCHED THAT CUPBOARD . . . AND FOUND IT BARE!
GAAARH! THERE'S NOBODY IN HERE! EVERYONE'S IN A PANIC FOR NOTHING!
BUT SOME WHILE LATER . . .
THE FAKE WALL NEVER FAILS TO DECEIVE . . . ROLL IT UP AND PUT IT AWAY, CRINGELIN, FOR I BELIEVE WE ARE DUE 'ON STAGE' NOW!
YES, MASTER!

DRESSED AS WAITERS, THESPIUS DECIDED THE TIME WAS RIGHT FOR THEIR ENTRY INTO THE BANQUET!
OOOOH! WHAT A WONDERFUL CAKE... I JUST LOVE CAKE!

HIS FACE A SOLEMN MASK OF SERVILE DIGNITY, THESPIUS LEANED UNRECOGNISED TOWARDS THE MAYOR'S EAR!
THE CAKE IS WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE MANAGEMENT, MAYOR VITCH! PERHAPS THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE WOULD LIKE TO CUT IT!
HOW THOUGHTFUL!

MIGHT I SUGGEST, MAYOR, THAT THE PRESS BE ALLOWED TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS EVENT!
ER... A GOOD IDEA!
OH YES... LET'S HAVE LOTS OF PHOTOGRAPHS... I JUST LOVE SEEING MYSELF IN NEWSPAPERS!
AND SO AT THESPIUS' SUGGESTION, THE PRESS ARE CALLED...

THEN AS MRS. BRIGHTPOWER REACHED FORWARD HER CHUBBY, DIAMOND-ENCRUSTED ARMS TO CUT THE CAKE, TWO DOORS FLEW OPEN, AND A PAIR OF SMALL HANDS SHOT OUT..!
EEEEEK!


THE TINY ARMS— WHICH BELONGED TO MINIM, A MIDGET IN THESPIUS' TROUPE— TUGGED!
EEEEERLP!

ANXIOUS HANDS HAULED THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE FROM HER CREAMY CALAMITY!
W- WHAT HAPPENED?
GRRRROOOOO-ULP! IT... B-R-R-R-R-R... PULLED ME...
OOOOOUGH! IT WAS HORRIBLE... AH! MY EAR-RINGS.. MY NECKLACE...

...MY BRACELET ... MY RINGS... THEY'VE ALL GONE!
THEY WERE WORTH THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS!
IT'S THE CAKE... THERE MUST BE SOMETHING PHONEY ABOUT THAT CAKE!

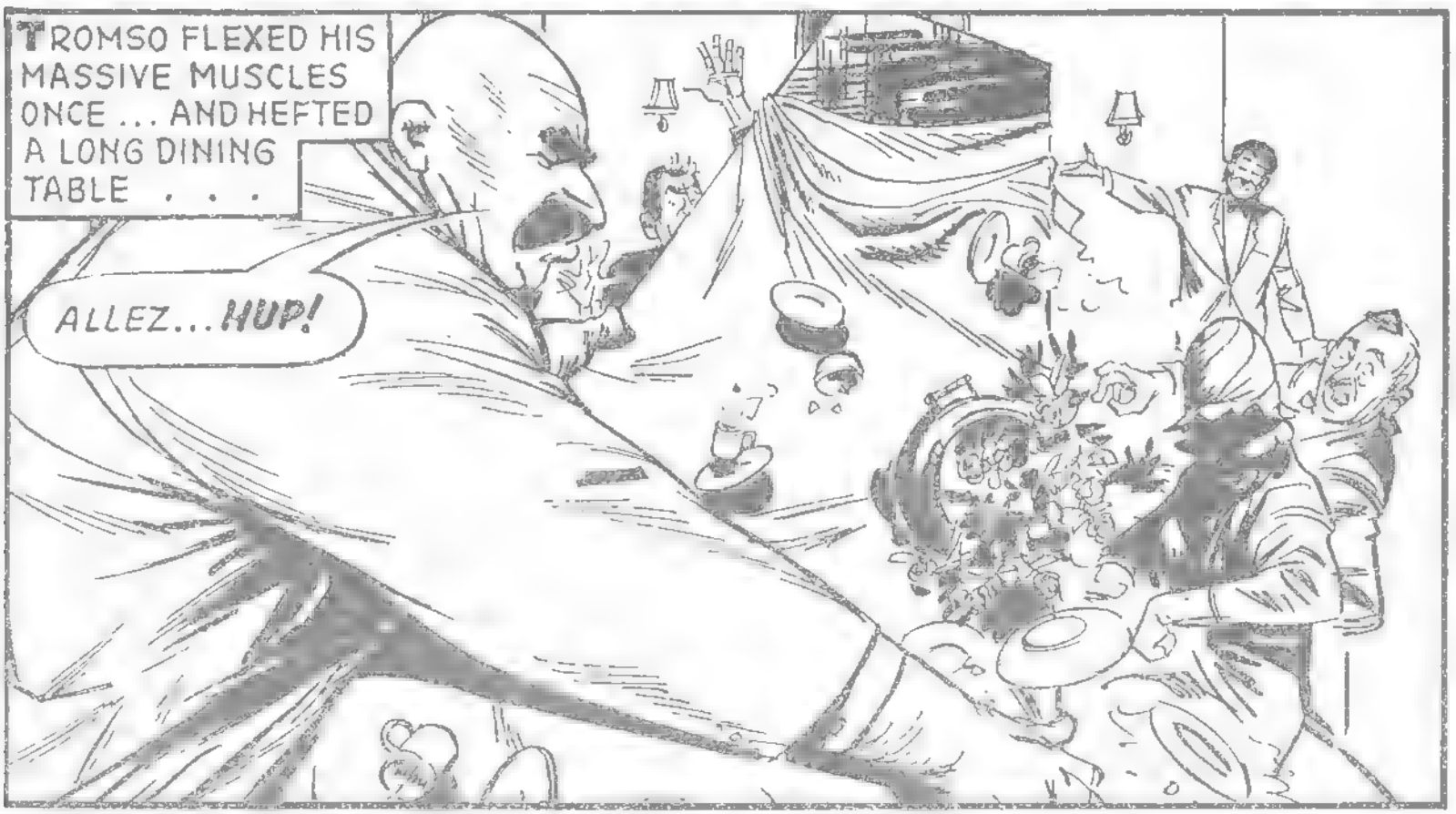
A CROWD OF ANGRY DINERS CHARGED THE OFFENDING CONFECTION ... BUT IT WAS NOT ENTIRELY DEFENCELESS!
LET'S GET IT... ULP!
HEY!
OW!

BUT THESPIUS, IN THE GUISE OF THE HELPFUL WAITER, WAS AT HAND...
JUST ONE MOMENT, SIR... I'LL WIPE THAT OFF!
ER... THANKS!

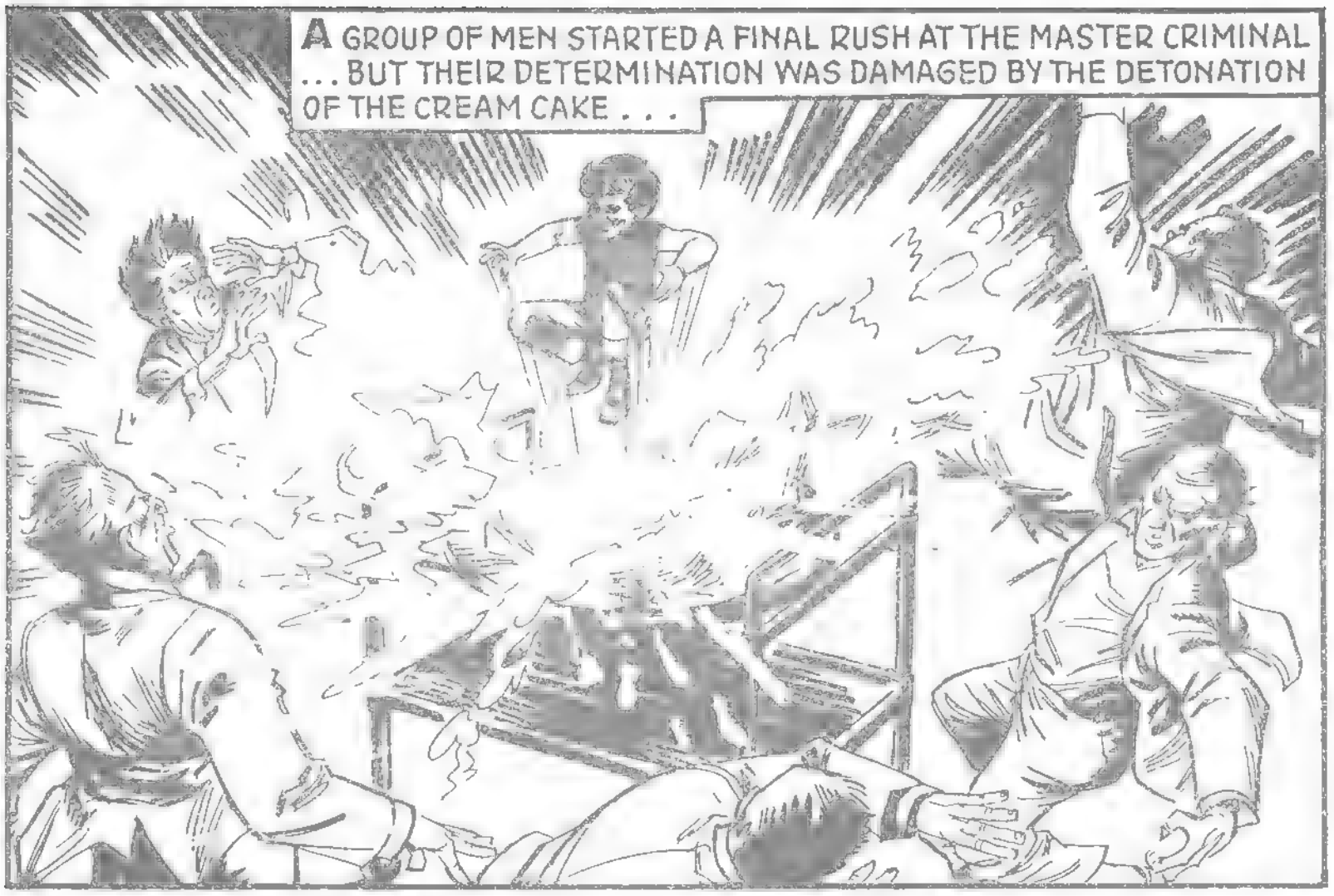
...BUT MOSTLY HE HELPED HIMSELF TO WALLETS AND WATCHES, HIS AMAZING SKILL OF SLEIGHT OF HAND RENDERING THE THEFTS ALMOST INVISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE!
ALLOW ME, SIR, TO REMOVE SOME OF YOUR CREAM...!
BUT IN ROBBING THE MAYOR HIMSELF, THESPIUS HAD BEEN TOO BOLD! HIS DISGUISE WAS PENETRATED!
THAT'S THESPIUS... PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE! SOMEONE CALL THE LAW!

SUDDENLY THE ROOM FELL SILENT SAVE FOR THE CHANDELIER-RATTLING SOBS OF MRS. BRIGHTPOWER...
...OH, I HATE CAKES... I HATE THIS HORRIBLE LITTLE TOWN... AND I HATE ALL THE HORRIBLE PEOPLE IN IT...
DON'T WORRY, MRS. BRIGHTWATER... THEY'VE CAUGHT THE MAN RESPONSIBLE...
AND AT THAT MOMENT, HENGIST AND THE POLICE RUSHED IN!
THERE HE IS ...GRAB HIM! DON'T GIVE HIM A CHANCE!
TROMSO... THIS IS THE GRANDE FINALE!
YES, MASTER! I KNOW JUST WHAT TO DO!

... AND NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN ... THE MIGHTY TROMSO!

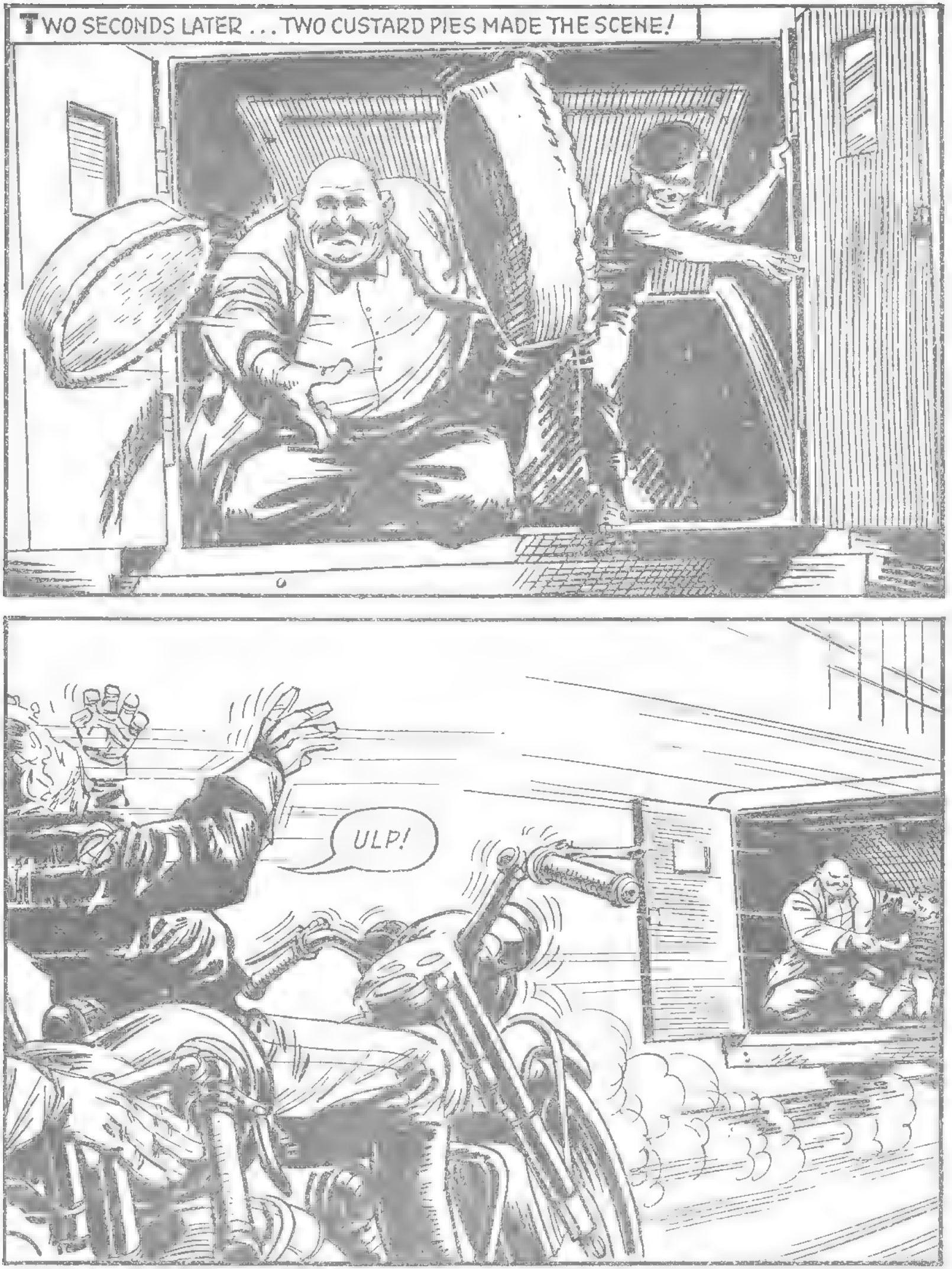

TROMSO FLEXED HIS MASSIVE MUSCLES ONCE ... AND HEFTED A LONG DINING TABLE . . .
ALLEZ... HUP!

. . . AND HE CONVERTED HIMSELF INTO A HUMAN BULLDOZER!
NGAAAAARGH!
GERRROFF!
OOOOH!
OW!
THEN THESPIUS'S NOBLE VOICE ROSE ABOVE THE INCREDIBLE COMMOTION!
OUR SHOW IS DONE... I HOPE YOU KIND AND UNKIND PEOPLE HAVE ENJOYED OUR ENTERTAINMENT...BUT NOW, ALAS, IS THE TIME OF OUR FAREWELLS!

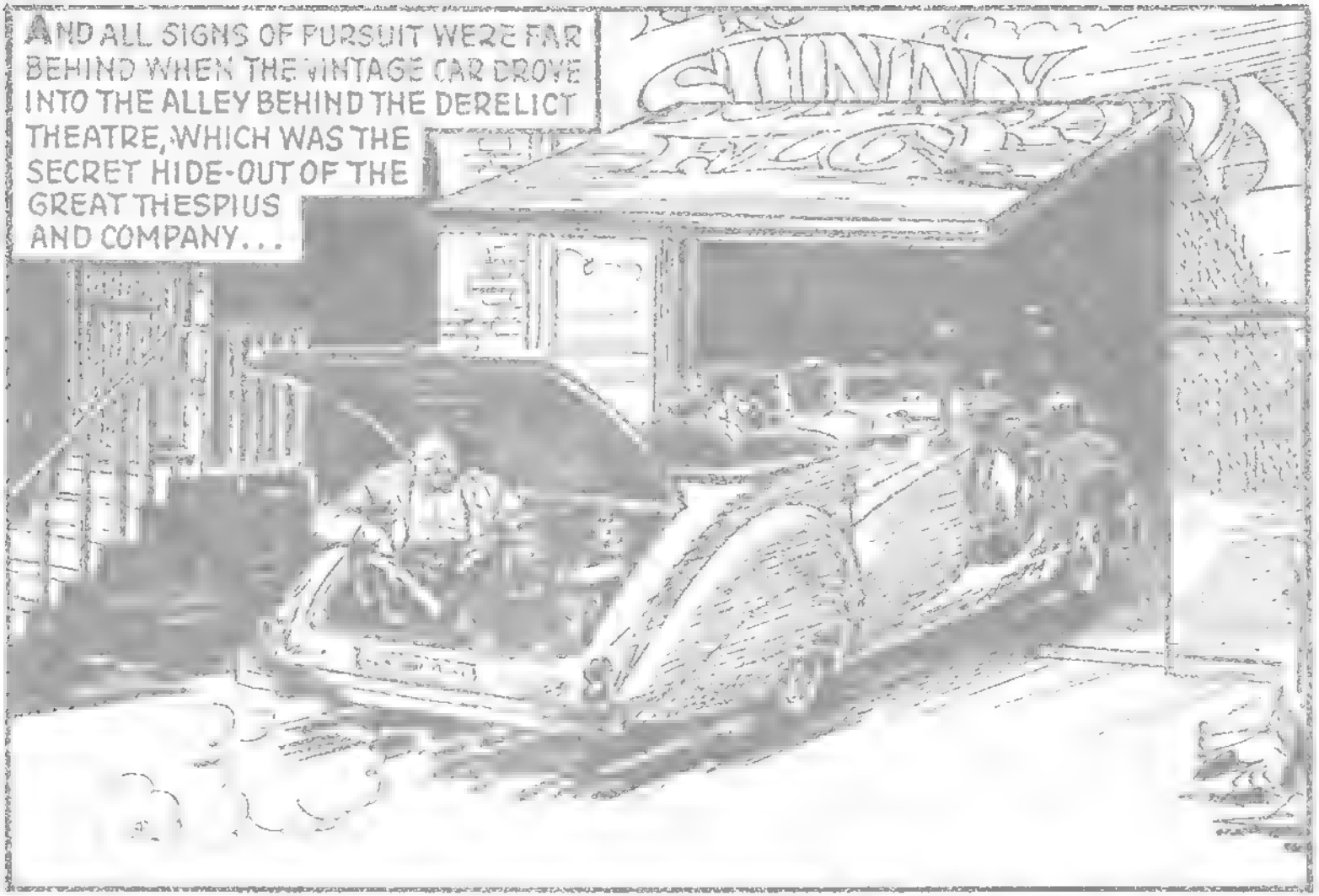

A GROUP OF MEN STARTED A FINAL RUSH AT THE MASTER CRIMINAL ... BUT THEIR DETERMINATION WAS DAMAGED BY THE DETONATION OF THE CREAM CAKE . . .

MINIM, TROMSO AND CRINGELIN MADE HURRIED EXITS TOWARDS THE KITCHENS . . . BUT THESPIUS COULD NOT RESIST ONE FINAL MOCKING BOW!
ARREST THAT VANDAL! D'YOU HEAR, VITCH? ARREST HIM!
Y-YES, SENATOR ... HENGIST, ARREST THAT ...THAT WRECKER!
S-SURE, MAYOR... B-BUT YOU TELL ME HOW!

THE DEPARTURE WAS VIA A REAR DOOR TO A 'BAKERY VAN' . . .
SERVICE ENTRANCE
THAT WAS INDEED AN ENJOYABLE LUNCHEON, CRINGELIN!
STOP THAT VAN!
AND PROFITABLE, TOO, I HOPE, MASTER!
BUT THESPIUS AND HIS TROUPE DID NOT TRAVEL FAR BEFORE THERE CAME THE WAIL OF PURSUIT...
HOW'S YOUR THROWING ARM, TROMSO?
PRETTY GOOD, LITTLE MINIM! LET'S TRY HIM!

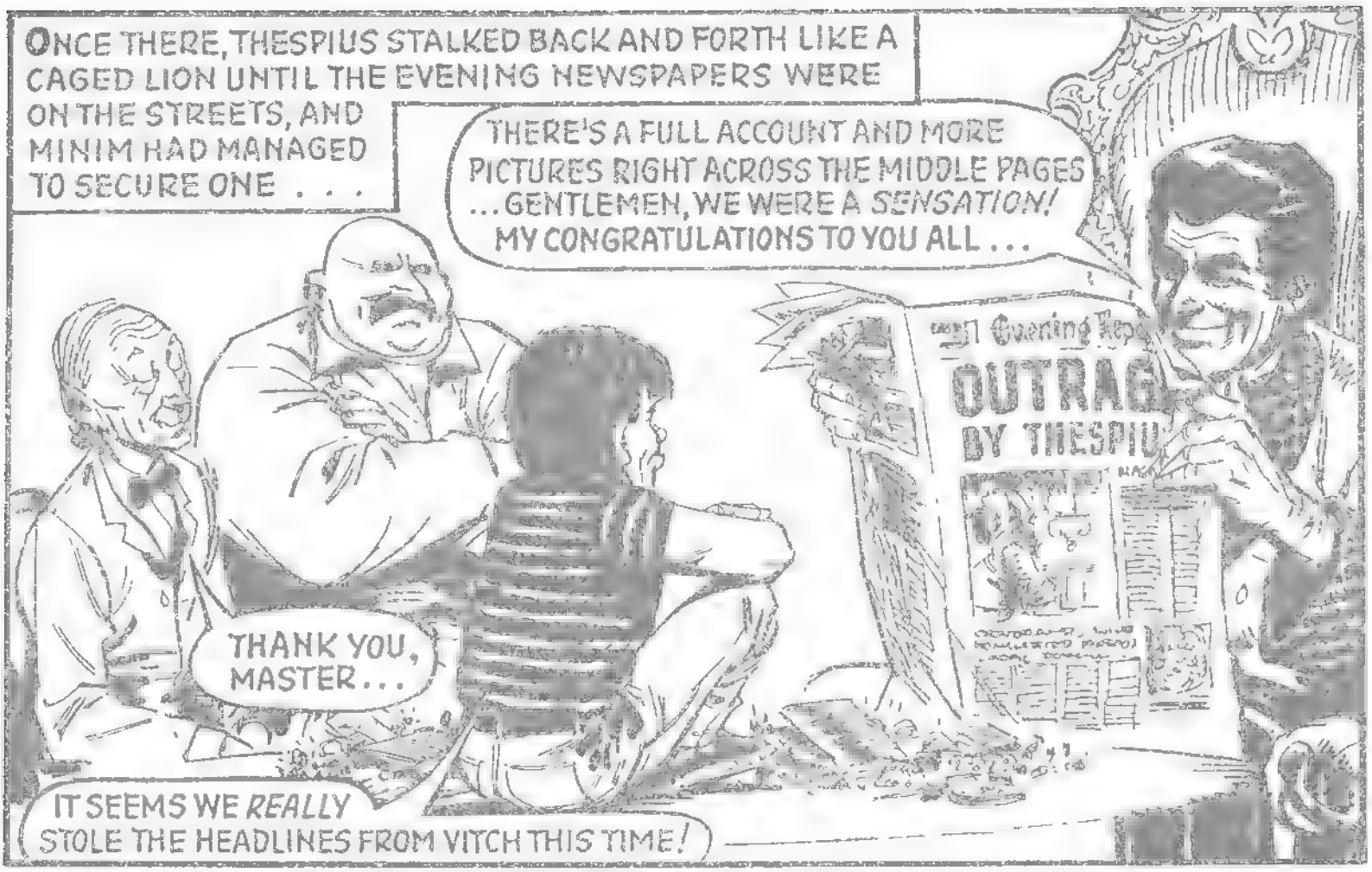

TWO SECONDS LATER . . . TWO CUSTARD PIES MADE THE SCENE!
ULP!

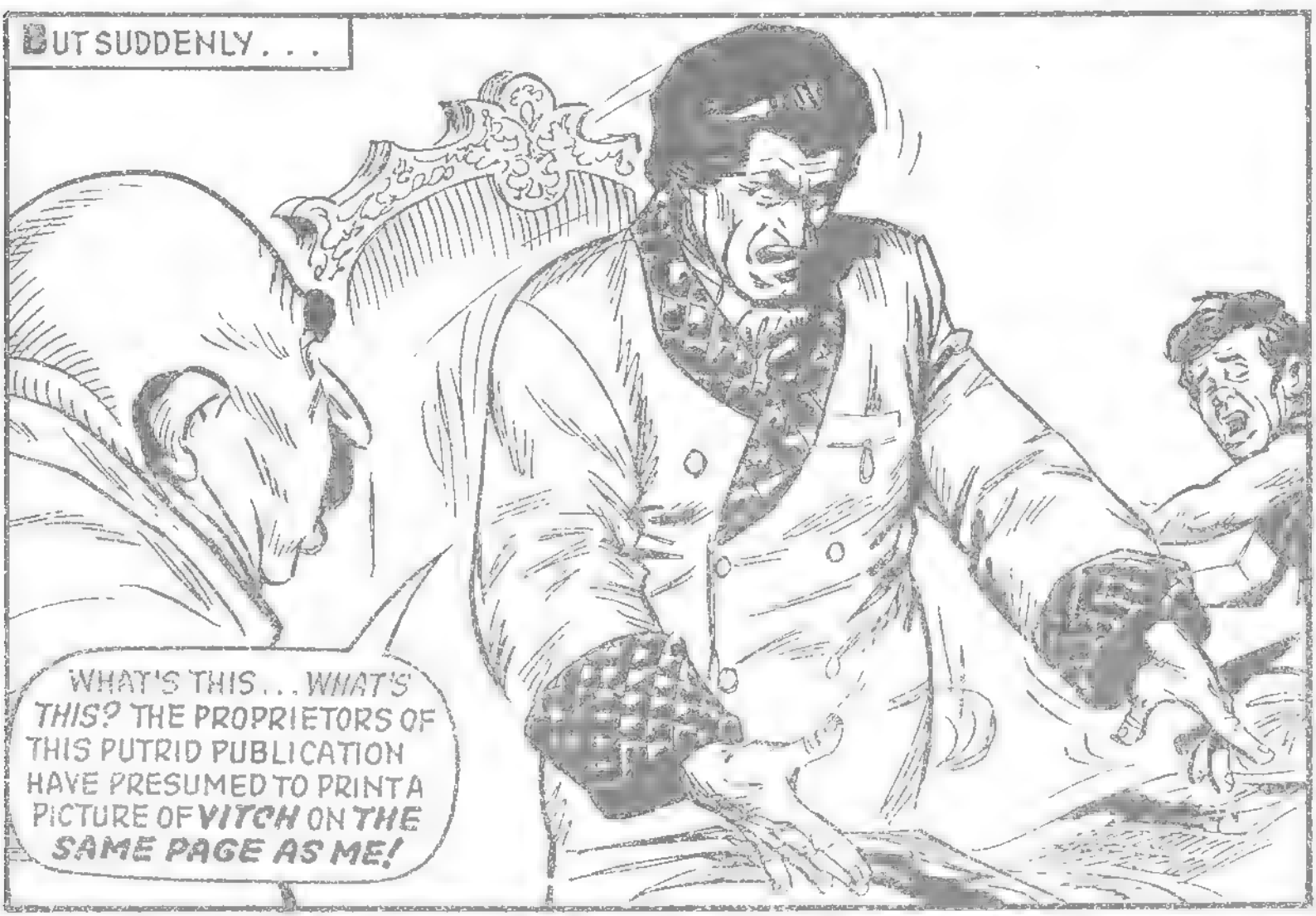
HA, HA, HA! Y'KNOW, CRINGELIN, A WELL-THROWN CUSTARD PIE IS ALWAYS GOOD FOR A LAUGH, I SAY!
YES, MASTER! BUT A PATROL CAR IS NOW TAKING UP THE CHASE... I SHALL HAVE TO JETTISON OUR CAR'S DISGUISE!
Fisch
THEN JETTISON, CRINGELIN... JETTISON!
I HAVE DONE SO, MASTER!
STAR BAKERIES


AND ALL SIGNS OF PURSUIT WERE FAR BEHIND WHEN THE VINTAGE CAR DROVE INTO THE ALLEY BEHIND THE DERELICT THEATRE, WHICH WAS THE SECRET HIDE-OUT OF THE GREAT THESPIUS AND COMPANY...

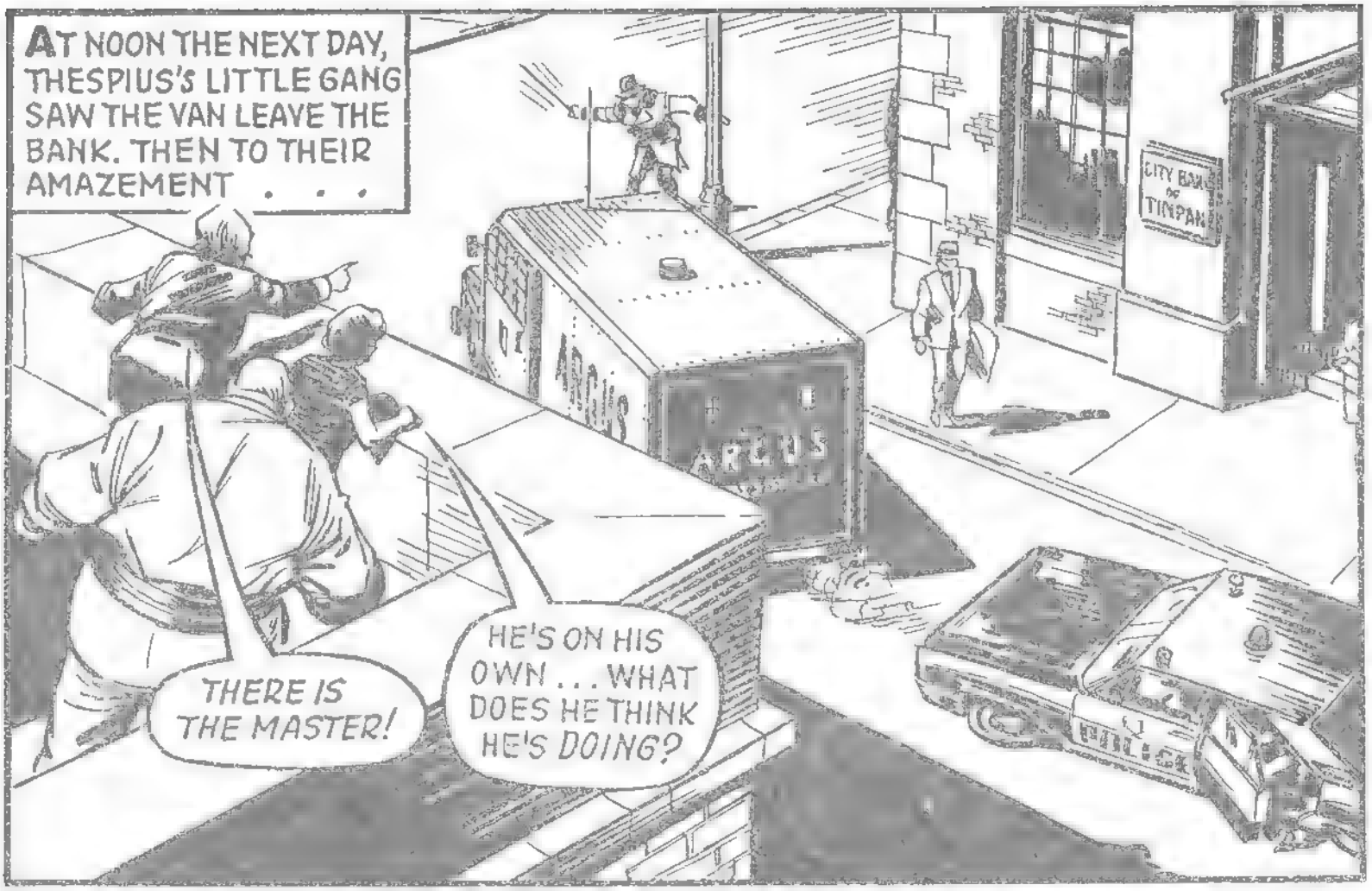
IT TOOK ONLY SECONDS TO CONCEAL THE VEHICLE IN ITS SUB-BASEMENT GARAGE. THEN ITS OCCUPANTS TOOK THEIR TRAPEZE LIFTS TO THEIR OWN HIDE-AWAY WITHIN THE DOME . . .

EAGLE P.L. 10


ONCE THERE, THESPIUS STALKED BACK AND FORTH LIKE A CAGED LION UNTIL THE EVENING NEWSPAPERS WERE ON THE STREETS, AND MINIM HAD MANAGED TO SECURE ONE . . .
THERE'S A FULL ACCOUNT AND MORE PICTURES RIGHT ACROSS THE MIDDLE PAGES ... GENTLEMEN, WE WERE A SENSATION! MY CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU ALL . . .
Evening Rep
OUTRAG
BY THESPIU
THANK YOU, MASTER . . .
IT SEEMS WE REALLY STOLE THE HEADLINES FROM VITCH THIS TIME!

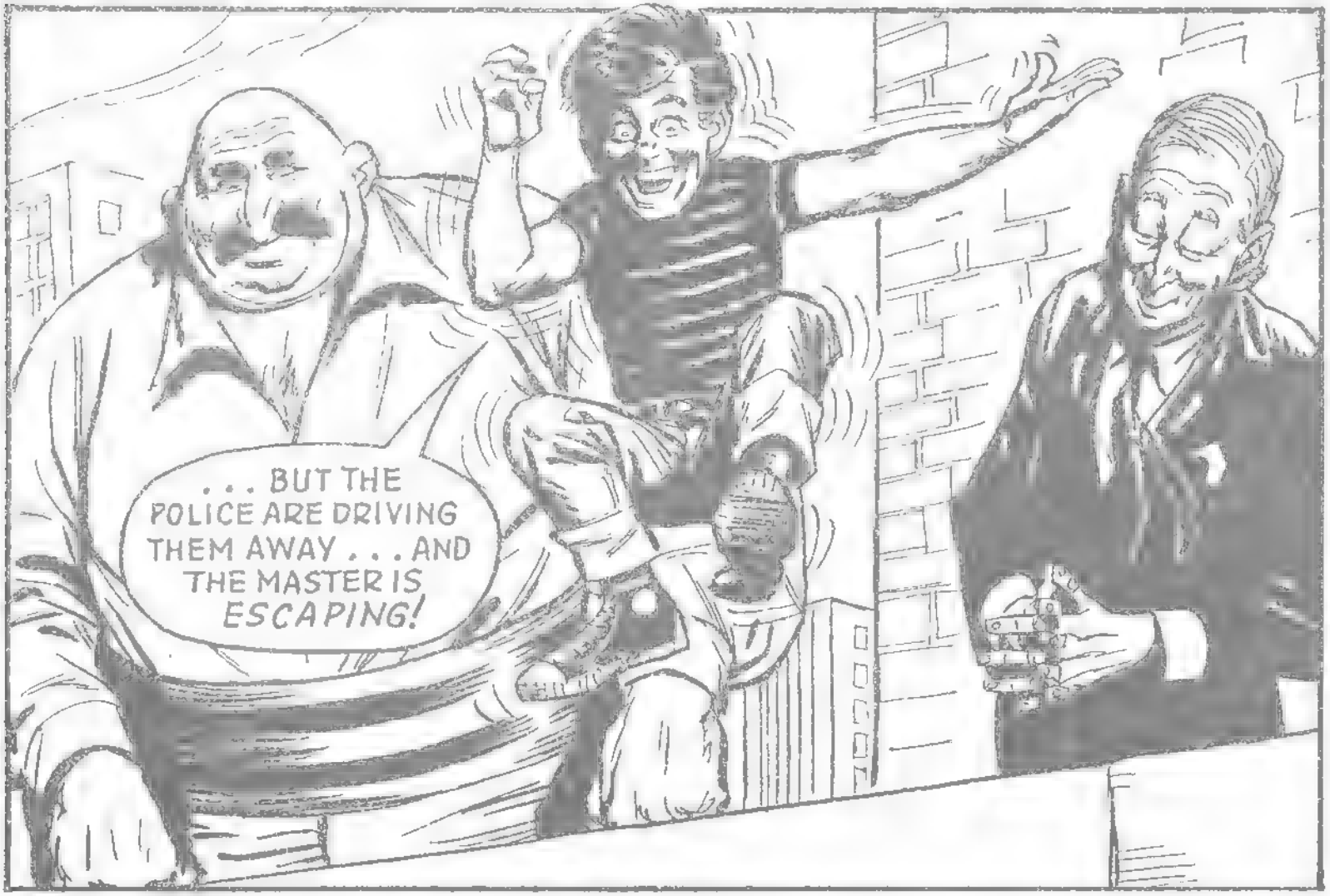

BUT SUDDENLY . . .
WHAT'S THIS . . . WHAT'S THIS? THE PROPRIETORS OF THIS PUTRID PUBLICATION HAVE PRESUMED TO PRINT A PICTURE OF VITCH ON THE SAME PAGE AS ME!

SCARCELY ABLE TO SEE FOR HIS JEALOUS ANGER THESPIUS READ THE ARTICLE BENEATH THE PHOTOGRAPH OF THE HATED MAYOR . . .
OWING TO THE UPSURGE OF GANGSTERISM AND FELONY IN THIS TOWN, MAYOR VITCH HAS MADE THE VAULTS AND STRONG ROOMS OF THE CITY HALL AVAILABLE TO ANY BANK, BUSINESS OR PRIVATE CITIZEN WHO WISHES TO DEPOSIT MONEY OR VALUABLES THEREIN FOR EXTRA SECURITY!
'THE CITY BANK OF TINPAN HAS ACCEPTED THIS INVITATION, AND WILL BE TRANSFERRING ITS ASSETS BY ARMOURED VAN AT NOON TOMORROW!' AHA! I SMELL THE STINK OF A CROOKED SCHEME BY VITCH!
WHAT'S THE PLAN, MASTER?
DO WE HI-JACK THE ARMOURED VAN?
THERE IS NO PLAN, DEAR MINIM! I SUSPECT NOT ONLY A TRAP... BUT A CUNNING PLOT BY WHICH THE VILLAINOUS VITCH WILL CONSIDERABLY ENRICH HIMSELF. FOR THE TIME-BEING WE SHALL MERELY WATCH AND WAIT!


AT NOON THE NEXT DAY, THESPIUS'S LITTLE GANG SAW THE VAN LEAVE THE BANK. THEN TO THEIR AMAZEMENT . . .
CITY BANK OF TINPAN
ARGUS
THERE IS THE MASTER!
HE'S ON HIS OWN . . . WHAT DOES HE THINK HE'S DOING?

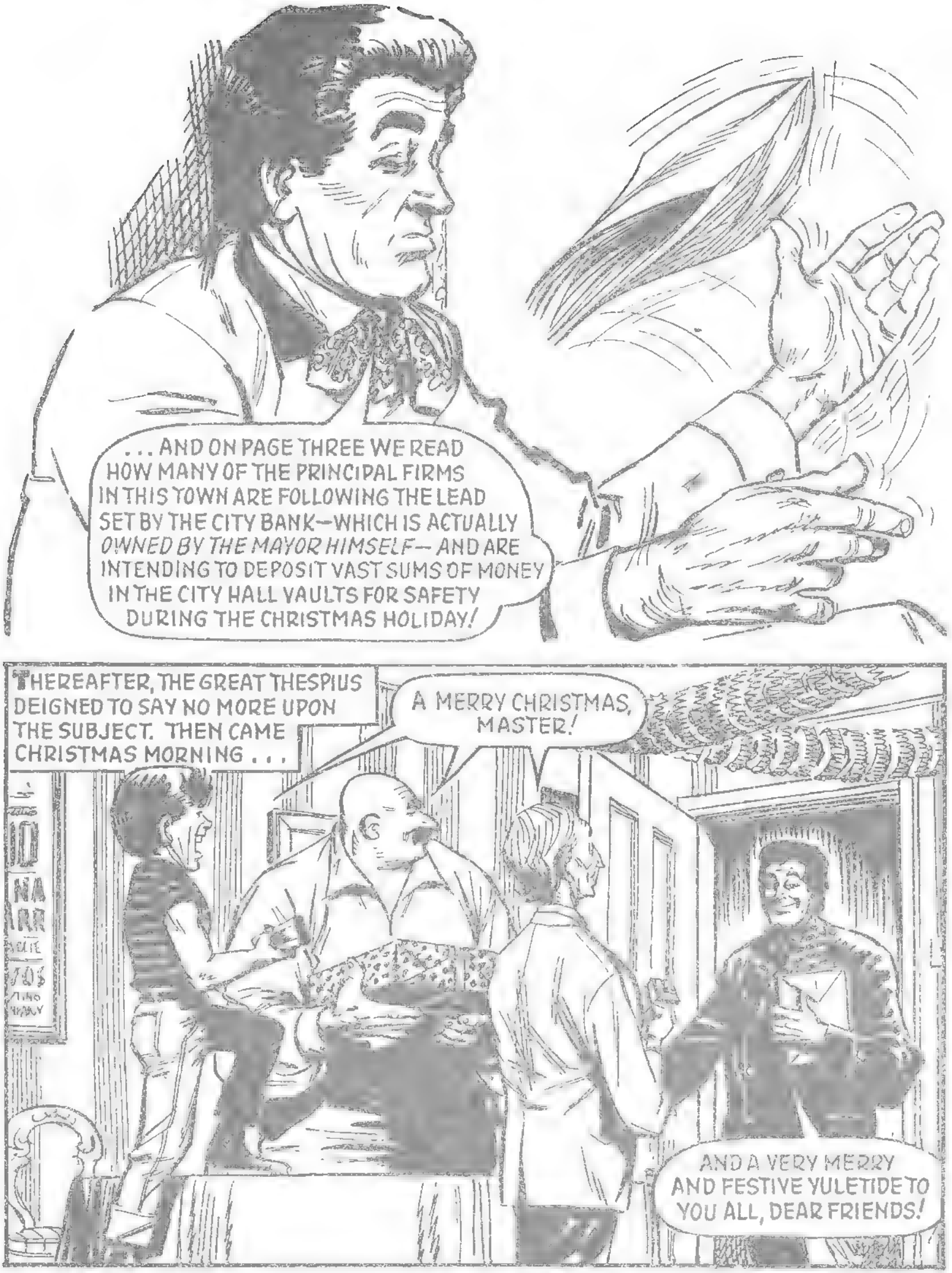
BUT WITHIN SECONDS . . .
ARREST THAT MAN! IT'S THESPIUS!
THEY'VE GOT THE BOSS! HE CAN'T ESCAPE!
POLI

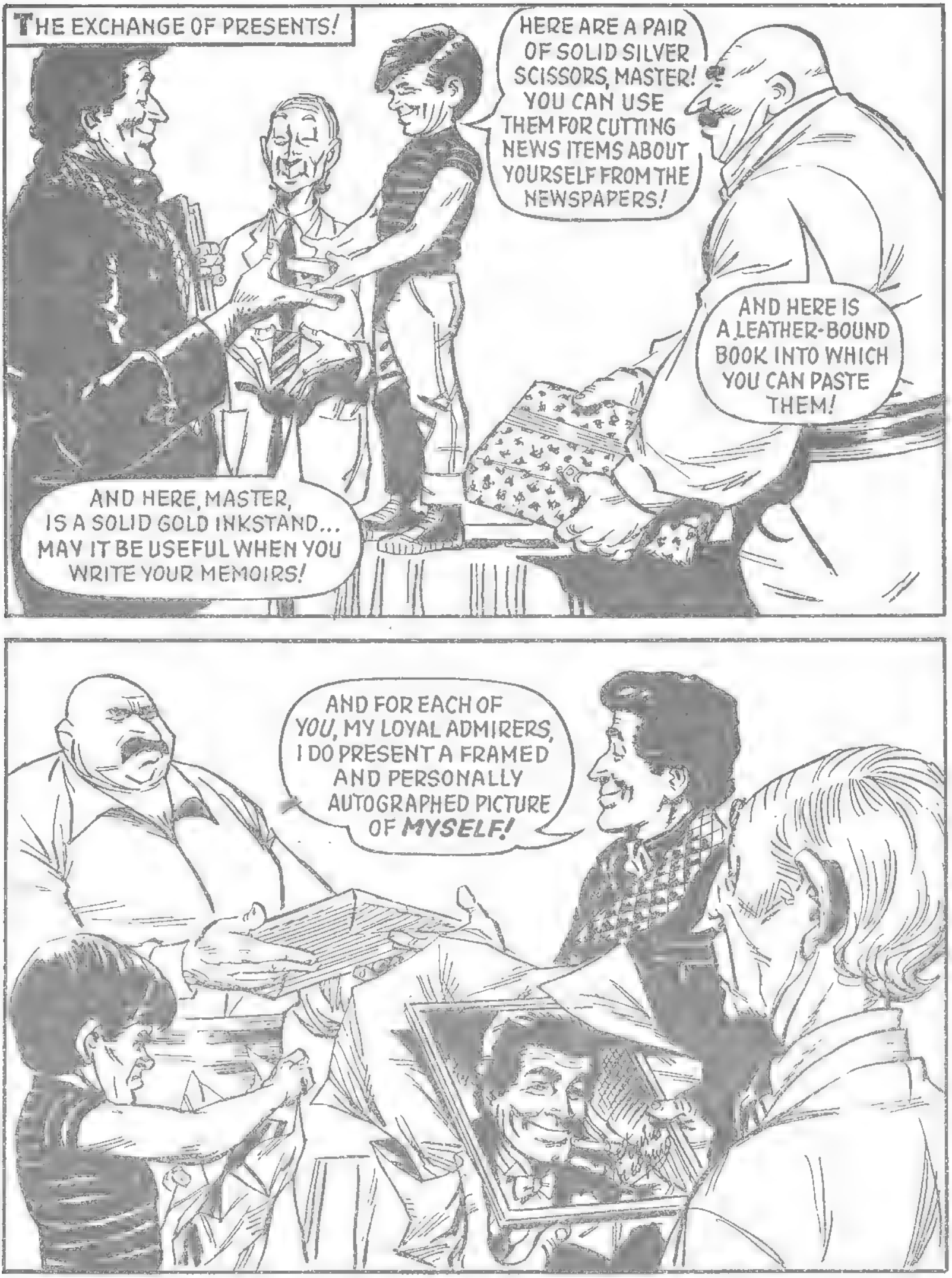
RUFFIANS ARE COMING FROM ALL SIDES!


. . . BUT THE POLICE ARE DRIVING THEM AWAY . . . AND THE MASTER IS ESCAPING!

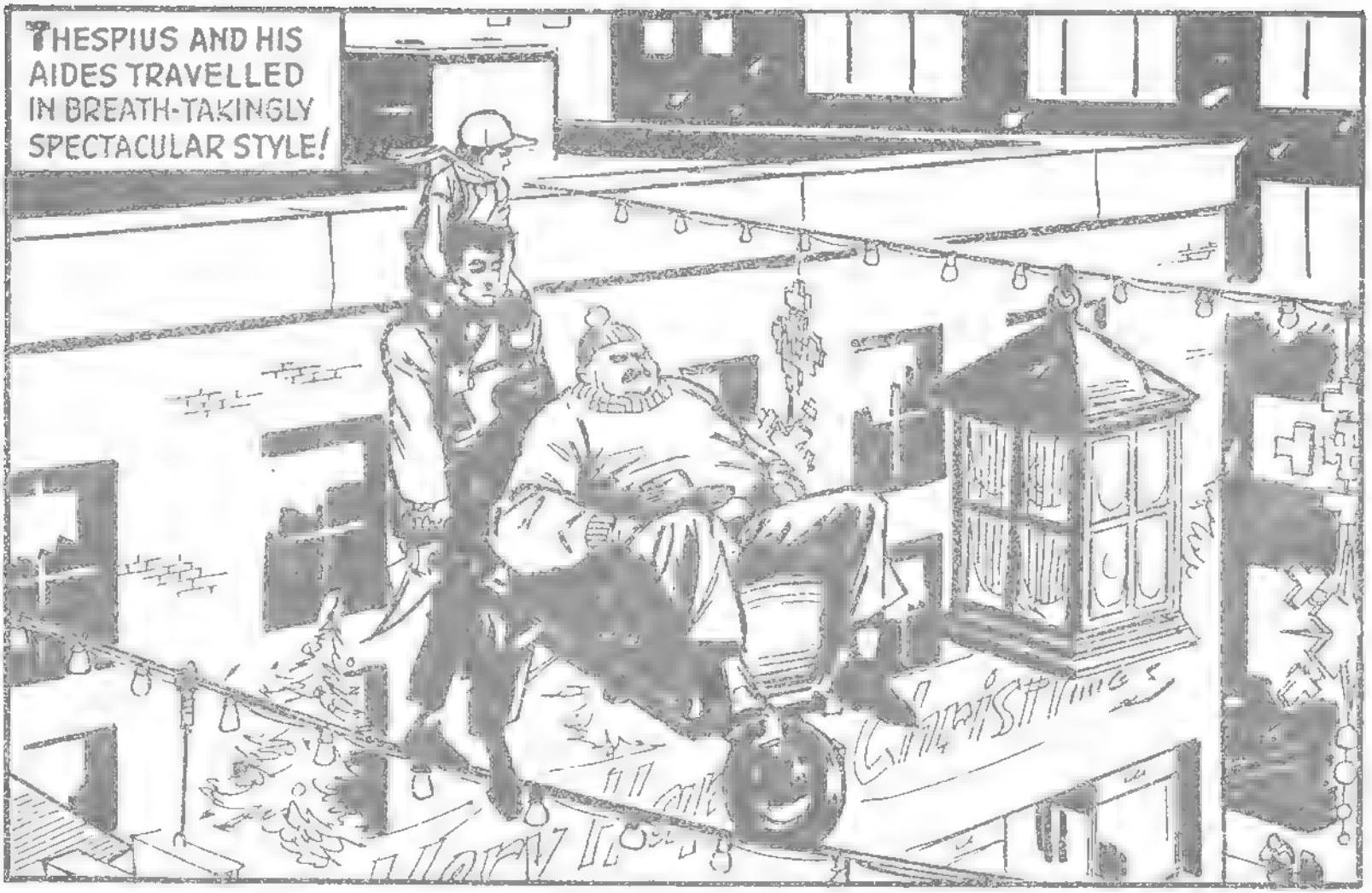
LOOK, LOOK! THE MASTER HAS ESCAPED!
IMPOSSIBLE, CRINGELIN! IMPOSSIBLE!
THE TRIO TURNED!
EH?
FOR HOW COULD I HAVE ESCAPED, IF I HAD NEVER BEEN CAPTURED?

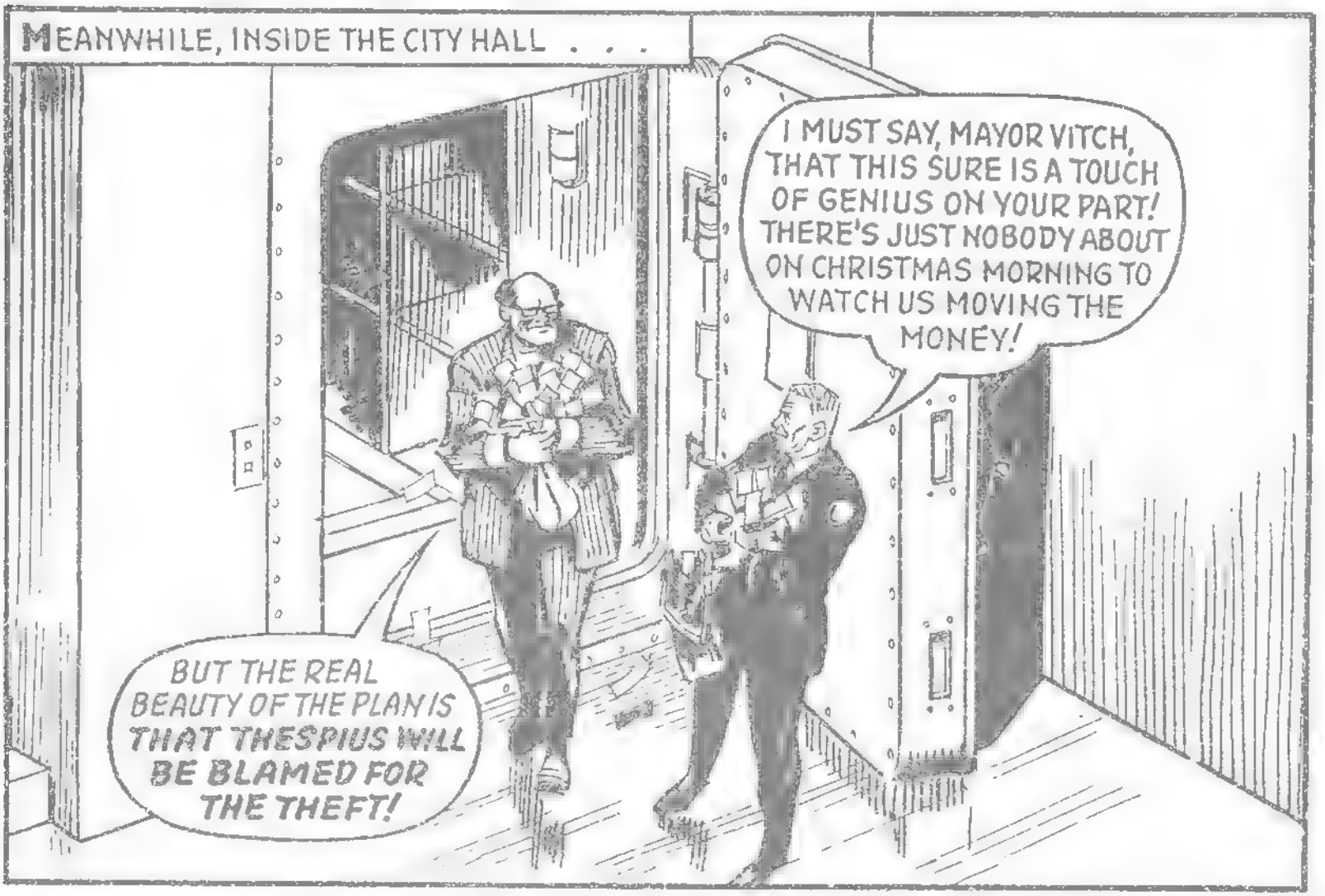
IF YOU WERE TO LOOK CLOSELY, YOU WOULD RECOGNISE ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN THAT PHONEY FRACAS AS OUR OLD FRIENDS . . . ER — ENEMIES . . . THE POLICE!
BUT THE REASON FOR THE POLICE PLAY-ACTING WAS NOT MADE CLEAR TO LESSER BRAINS THAN THESPIUS'S UNTIL THE PUBLICATION OF THE NEXT DAY'S NEWSPAPERS . . .
ON PAGE ONE WE HAVE A GLOWING, GLORIOUS REPORT ON HOW CHIEF HENCIST'S BOLD POLICEMEN FOUGHT OFF A BID BY ME, THESPIUS, TO ROB THE ARMOURED VAN OF ITS CONTENTS . . . ON PAGE TWO, MAYOR VITCH WRITES AN ARTICLE SAYING HOW MUCH SAFER MONEY IS IN THE CITY'S CARE . . .
I SEE IT ALL NOW, MASTER. THEY WERE MAKING IT APPEAR YESTERDAY THAT YOU HAD BEEN FOILED IN A ROBBERY ATTEMPT.


. . . AND ON PAGE THREE WE READ HOW MANY OF THE PRINCIPAL FIRMS IN THIS TOWN ARE FOLLOWING THE LEAD SET BY THE CITY BANK—WHICH IS ACTUALLY *OWNED BY THE MAYOR HIMSELF*— AND ARE INTENDING TO DEPOSIT VAST SUMS OF MONEY IN THE CITY HALL VAULTS FOR SAFETY DURING THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY!
THEREAFTER, THE GREAT THESPIUS DEIGNED TO SAY NO MORE UPON THE SUBJECT. THEN CAME CHRISTMAS MORNING . . .
A MERRY CHRISTMAS, MASTER!
AND A VERY MERRY AND FESTIVE YULETIDE TO YOU ALL, DEAR FRIENDS!


THE EXCHANGE OF PRESENTS!
HERE ARE A PAIR OF SOLID SILVER SCISSORS, MASTER! YOU CAN USE THEM FOR CUTTING NEWS ITEMS ABOUT YOURSELF FROM THE NEWSPAPERS!
AND HERE IS A LEATHER-BOUND BOOK INTO WHICH YOU CAN PASTE THEM!
AND HERE, MASTER, IS A SOLID GOLD INKSTAND... MAY IT BE USEFUL WHEN YOU WRITE YOUR MEMOIRS!
AND FOR EACH OF YOU, MY LOYAL ADMIRERS, I DO PRESENT A FRAMED AND PERSONALLY AUTOGRAPHED PICTURE OF MYSELF!

AND NOW TO WORK!
BUT IT'S CHRISTMAS MORNING!
THAT MATTERS NOT... AND TROMSO, BRING THE WHEELBARROW!
TARRY HERE, CRINGELIN, AND PREPARE OUR CHRISTMAS DINNER, TO WHICH WE SHALL BE RETURNING AFTER A ROOFTOP STROLL TO CITY HALL!


THESPIUS AND HIS AIDES TRAVELLED IN BREATH-TAKINGLY SPECTACULAR STYLE!


MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE CITY HALL . . .
I MUST SAY, MAYOR VITCH, THAT THIS SURE IS A TOUCH OF GENIUS ON YOUR PART! THERE'S JUST NOBODY ABOUT ON CHRISTMAS MORNING TO WATCH US MOVING THE MONEY!
BUT THE REAL BEAUTY OF THE PLAN IS THAT THESPIUS WILL BE BLAMED FOR THE THEFT!

VILLAINOUS MAYOR VITCH AND THE CROOKED POLICE-CHIEF MADE SEVERAL JOURNEYS TO AND FROM THAT VAULT. ON THEIR LAST JOURNEY . . .
HELP! HELP! I'M TRAPPED AT THE BACK OF THE VAULT . . . HELP!
WHAT THE HECK? THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANYONE IN THERE!
WE'D BETTER SEE!

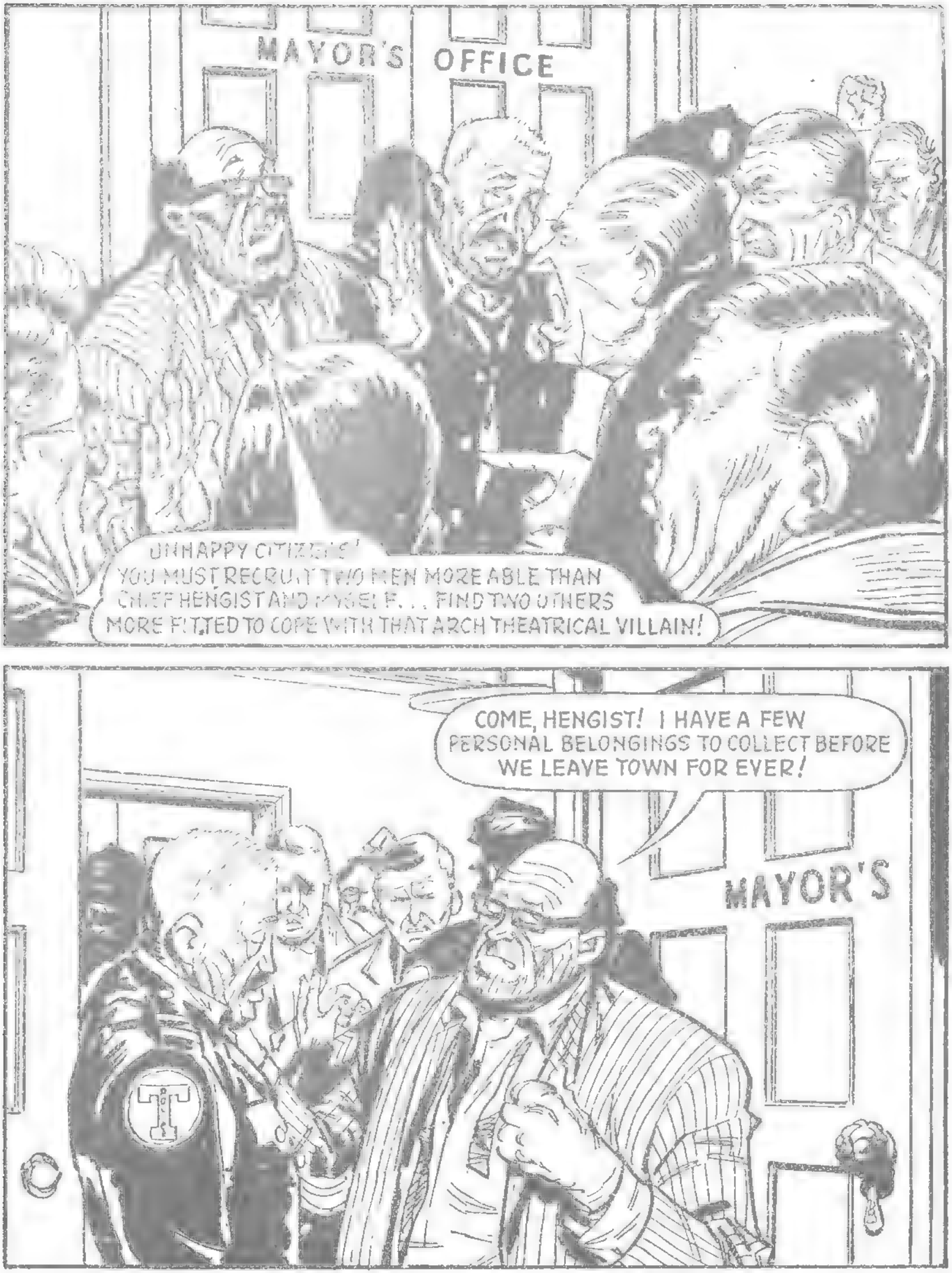
THE SHOUTING CONTINUED . . .
HELP! HELP! I'M IN TROUBLE!
A NEAT PIECE OF VENTRILOQUISM, MINIM! THAT WILL LEAD THEM DEEP INTO THE TRAP . . .

THEN TROMSO SPRANG FORWARD AND USED HIS MIGHTY STRENGTH AGAINST THE MASSIVE DOOR!
BRAVO, TROMSO! YOUR STRENGTH WAS VITAL TO THE RAPID CLOSING OF THAT PONDEROUS PORTAL!
VITCH AND HENGIST ARE SAFE, MASTER! NOW DO WE LOOK FOR THE LOOT THEY WERE HIDING?
NOT NOW, TROMSO! CRINGELIN WILL HAVE OUR CHRISTMAS DINNER READY BY THIS TIME! WE MUST NOT LET IT SPOIL!

AND SO THESPIUS WHISKED HIS PUZZLED PALS BACK ABOVE THE STREETS TO THEIR HIDE-OUT AND THE FESTIVE FEAST THAT AWAITED!
NOW I SHALL PROPOSE A TOAST... A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO US ALL!
YEA, MASTER... MERRY CHRISTMAS AND ALL THAT... BUT SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY IS A WHOLE LOAD OF LOOT... AND WE LEFT IT!
FEAR NOT, TROMSO! ALL IS GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN... MY PLAN!

SHORTLY AFTER CHRISTMAS, THE VAULT WAS OPENED . . .
AAAAARGH . . . BRING WATER . . . WATER . . .
THESPIUS! HE DID IT!
MAYOR VITCH! CHIEF HENGIST . . . B-BUT HOW? . . . WHO . . ?
THE VAULT'S EMPTY! IT'S BEEN STRIPPED OF ALMOST EVERYTHING!
THESPIUS . . . HE KIDNAPPED CHIEF HENGIST AND MYSELF . . . FORCED US TO OPEN THE VAULT . . .
. . . THEN HE LOOTED IT AND SHUT US IN!

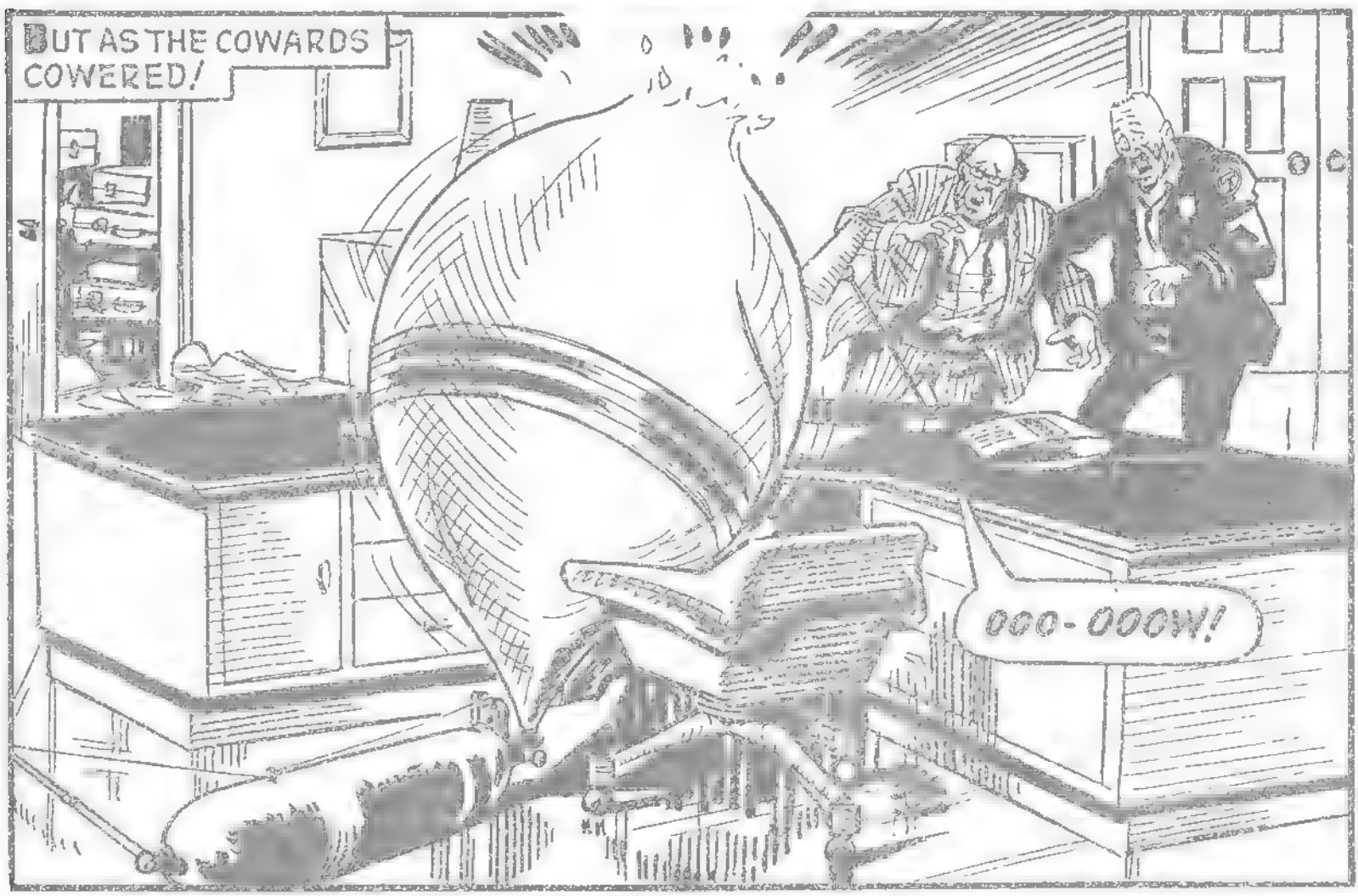
THE MAYOR AND THE POLICE CHIEF WERE LYING FRANTICALLY!
CHIEF HENGIST AND I HAVE FAILED AS PROTECTORS OF THE TOWN'S WEALTH! AS FAILURES, WE FEEL BOUND TO RESIGN FROM CIVIC OFFICE!
THE WORD SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE, AND EVEN BEFORE YITCH COULD REACH HIS OFFICE, PROMINENT CITIZENS, MANY OF WHOM HAD LOST VAST SUMS OF MONEY FROM THE CITY HALL VAULT, CROWDED THE BUILDING!
YOU PROMISED TO PROTECT OUR CASH! WHAT ABOUT IT?
YOUR RESIGNATION WON'T GET US BACK OUR CASH!
AND ALAS, NOR WILL OUR REMAINING IN OFFICE! WE ADMIT THAT THESPIUS HAS BEATEN US!

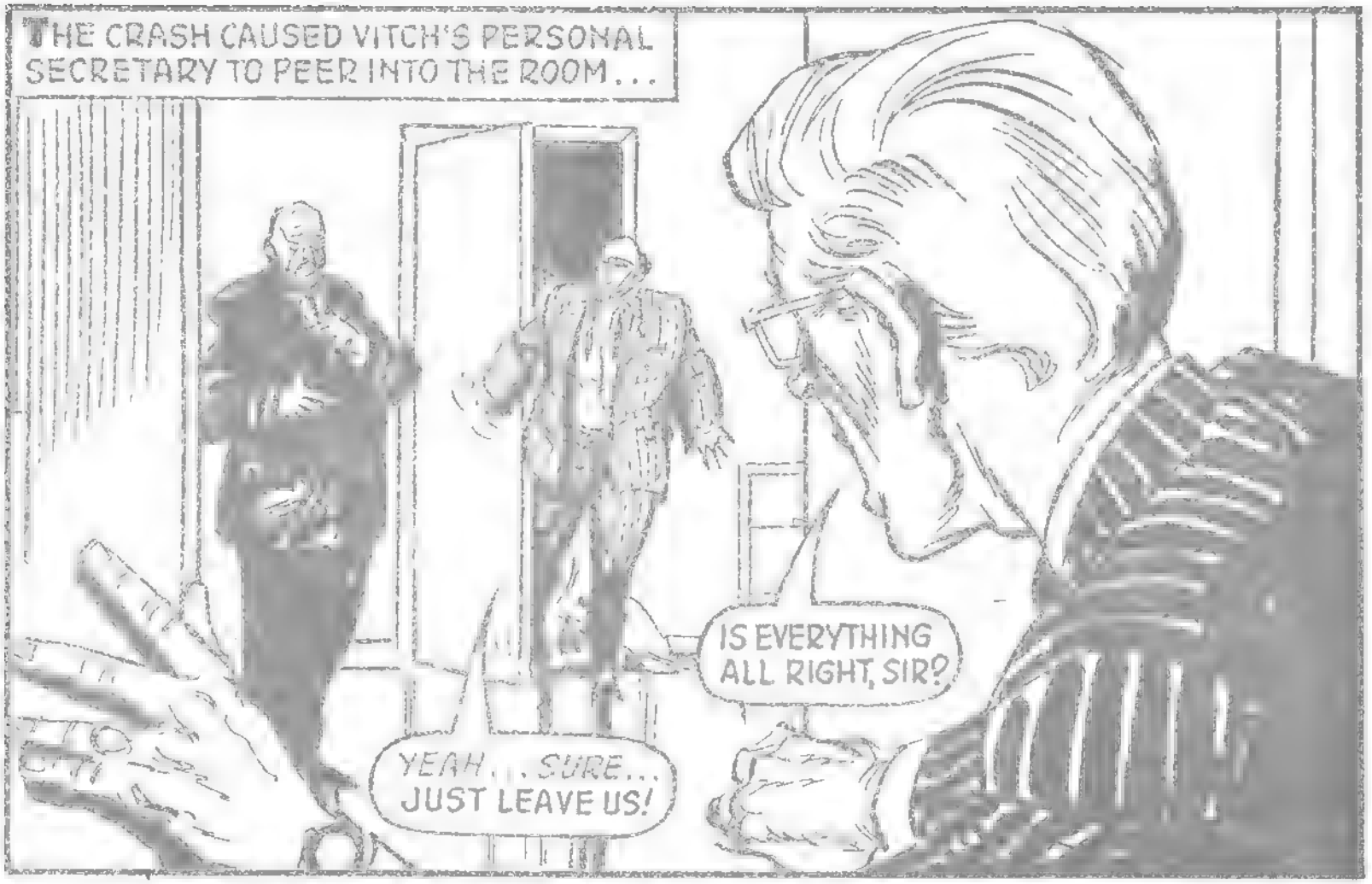

MAYOR'S OFFICE
UNHAPPY CITIZENS!
YOU MUST RECRUIT TWO MEN MORE ABLE THAN CHIEF HENGIST AND MYSELF... FIND TWO OTHERS MORE FITTED TO COPE WITH THAT ARCH THEATRICAL VILLAIN!
COME, HENGIST! I HAVE A FEW PERSONAL BELONGINGS TO COLLECT BEFORE WE LEAVE TOWN FOR EVER!
MAYOR'S

BUT AS SOON AS THE DOOR WAS SAFELY SHUT!
HEE, HEE, HEE! IT'S GOING LIKE A DREAM! WE SURE FOOLED 'EM!
THAT'S WHAT SUCKERS ARE FOR . . . FOOLING! HO, HO, HO!
VITCH HURRIEDLY OPENED THE CUPBOARD IN WHICH THEY HAD TEMPORARILY HIDDEN THE MONEY . . . AND WAS SUDDENLY FACE TO FACE WITH HIS ARTFUL ARCH-ENEMY!
AAAARGH!

IN A TANTRUM OF FURY, VITCH BEAT HIS FISTS AGAINST THE TAUNTING FIGURE . . . AND FELT IT YIELD!
YAAARGH!
SO HE KNEW WHERE WE HID THE DOUGH..!
GAH! THIS IS ONLY A CARDBOARD DUMMY!

GRAAAAA!
TH-THAT'S NO DUMMY!

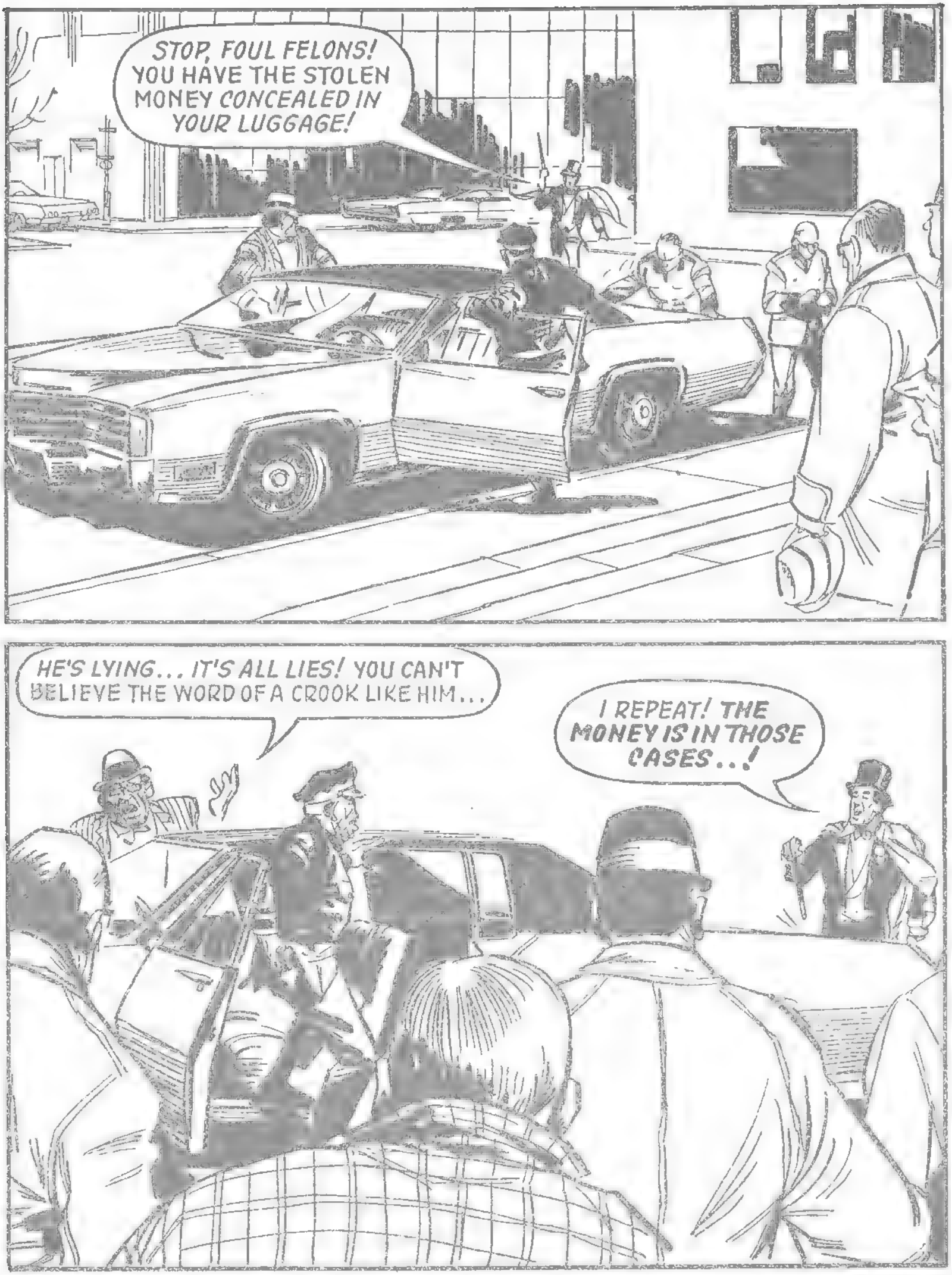

BUT AS THE COWARDS COWERED!
OOO-OOOW!


THE CRASH CAUSED VITCH'S PERSONAL SECRETARY TO PEER INTO THE ROOM...
IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT, SIR?
YEAH... SURE... JUST LEAVE US!

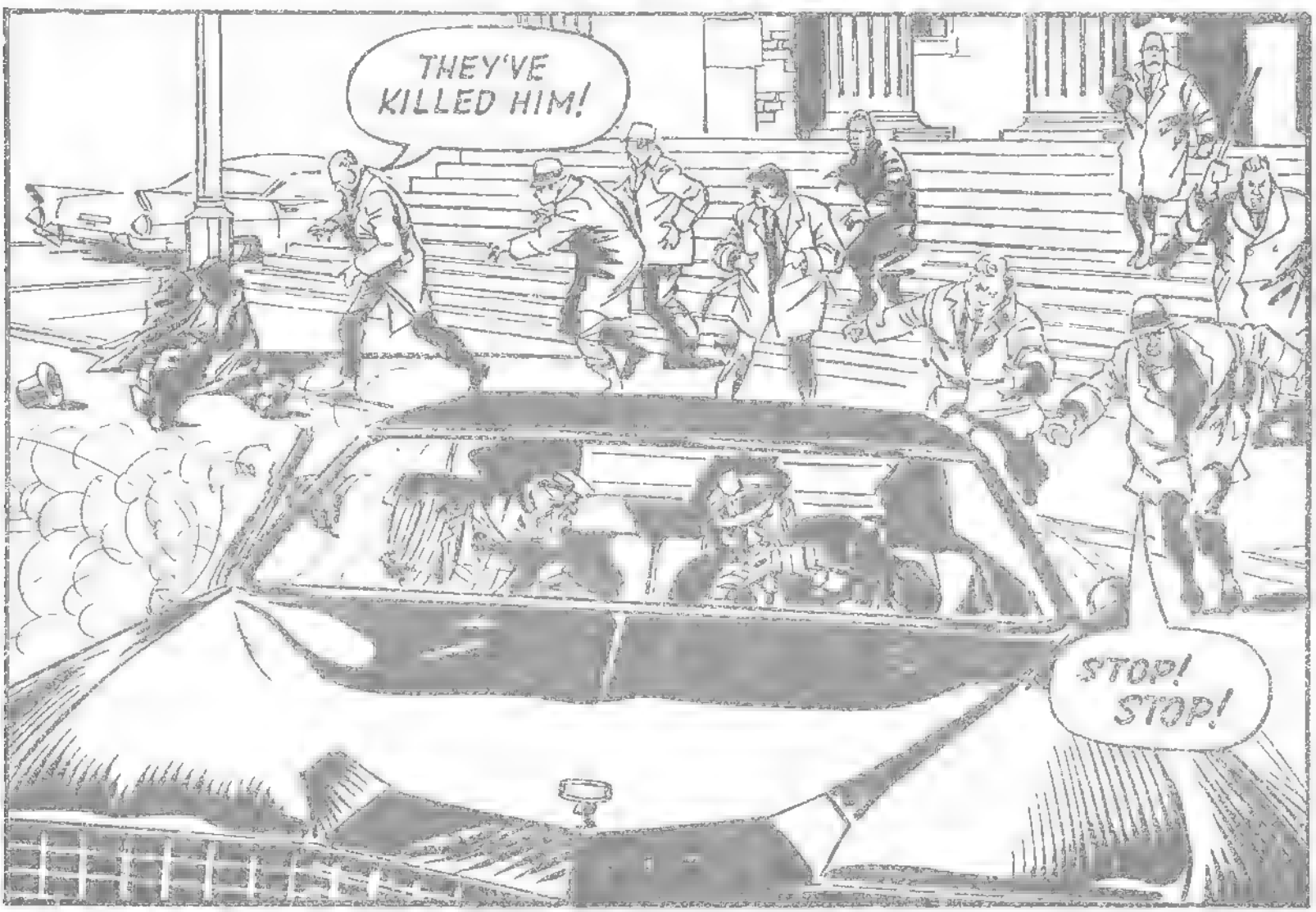
BUT VITCH AND HENGIST WERE WORRIED MEN. THEY WERE OVERSCARED...
I CAN SEE THROUGH THESPIUS... HE'S GOING TO HAUNT US, TORMENT US AND *BLACKMAIL* THE MONEY OUT OF US...
THAT RAT SURE HAS GOT US BOOKED!

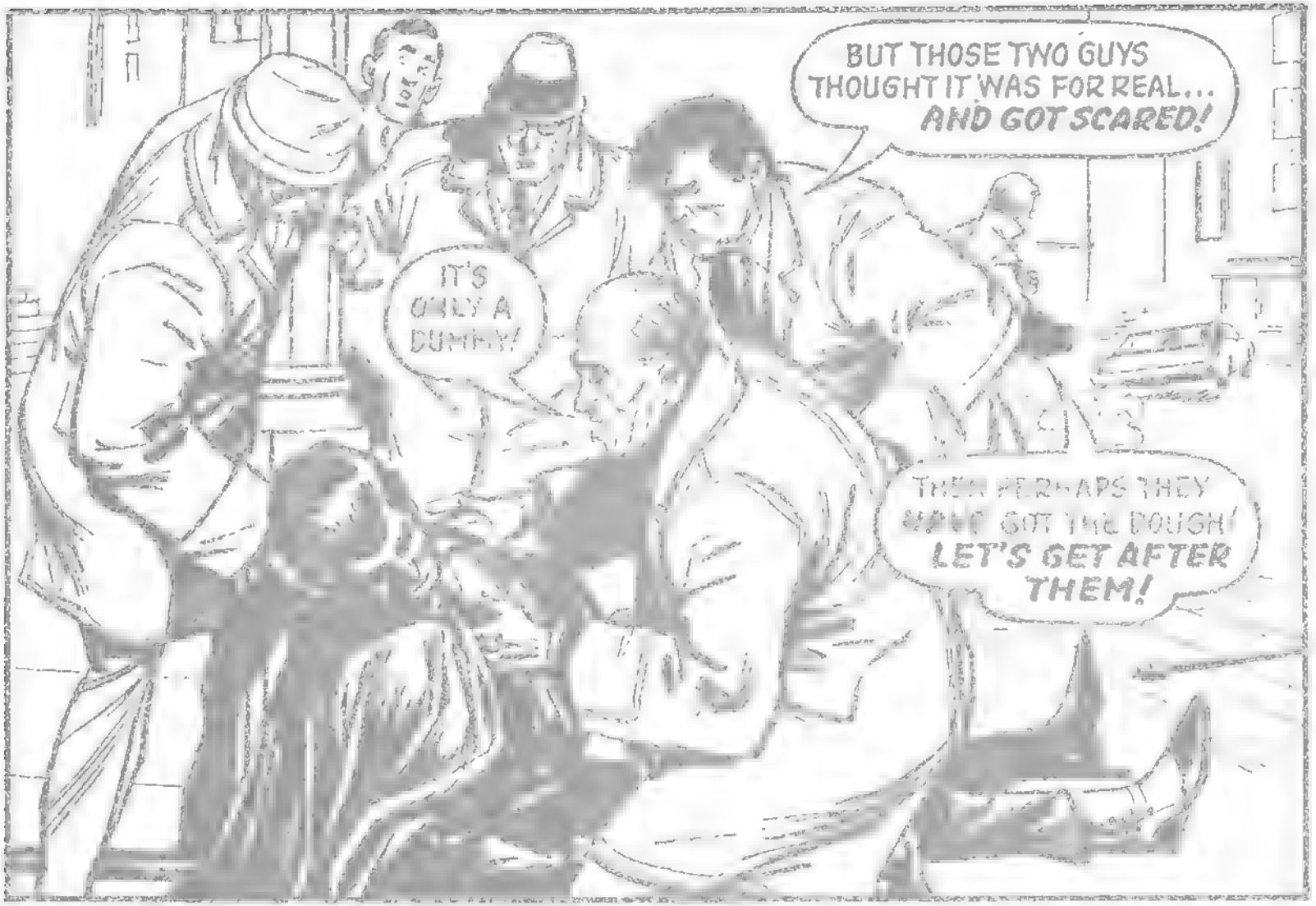
THEY WERE ALSO OVERHEARD!
. . . WE'VE GOT TO MAKE A RUN FOR IT, VITCH!
I'LL HAUL OUT THE CASES WITH THE MONEY WHILST YOU GET THE CAR, HENGIST! THEN WE'LL HIT THE ROAD FOR LOS ANGELES!
THANKS TO THE MODERN MARVEL OF RADIO, WE KNOW ALL WE WISH TO KNOW ABOUT OUR ADVERSARIES . . . AND *NOW* WE SHALL EXPOSE THEIR DARK DEEDS TO THE *WORLD*!

BE READY, MINIM... THE FINAL ACT IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!
READY, MASTER!
AND IN THE STREET OUTSIDE CITY HALL!
THAT'S THE LAST CASE!
RIGHT, LET'S GET GOING!
GOOD LUCK, MASTER!


STOP, FOUL FELONS! YOU HAVE THE STOLEN MONEY CONCEALED IN YOUR LUGGAGE!
HE'S LYING... IT'S ALL LIES! YOU CAN'T BELIEVE THE WORD OF A CROOK LIKE HIM...
I REPEAT! THE MONEY IS IN THOSE CASES..!

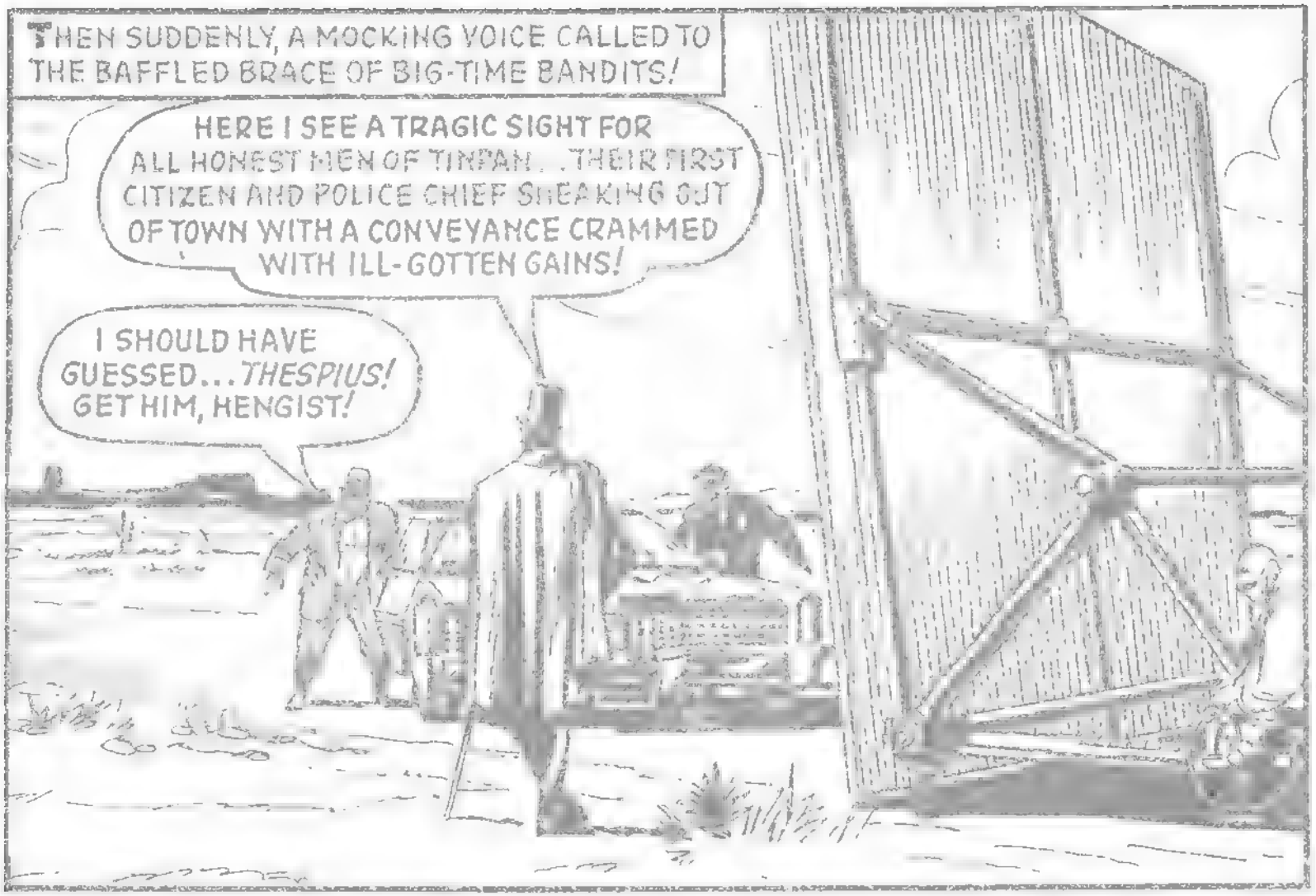
AT THAT MOMENT, HENGIST PANICKED!
LET'S GET OUTA HERE, VITCH!
AAAARGH! I'M HIT!


THEY'VE KILLED HIM!
STOP! STOP!


BUT THOSE TWO GUYS THOUGHT IT WAS FOR REAL... AND GOT SCARED!
IT'S ONLY A DUMMY!
THEN PERHAPS THEY HAVE GOT THE DOUGH! LET'S GET AFTER THEM!

THE TWO CROOKS HAD A GOOD START, BUT SOME DISTANCE OUT OF TOWN . . .
I DON'T REMEMBER A STEEP HILL HERE BEFORE . . . AND IT'S GETTING STEEPER!
WHAT'S THAT FOOL CAR DOING ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE ROAD?

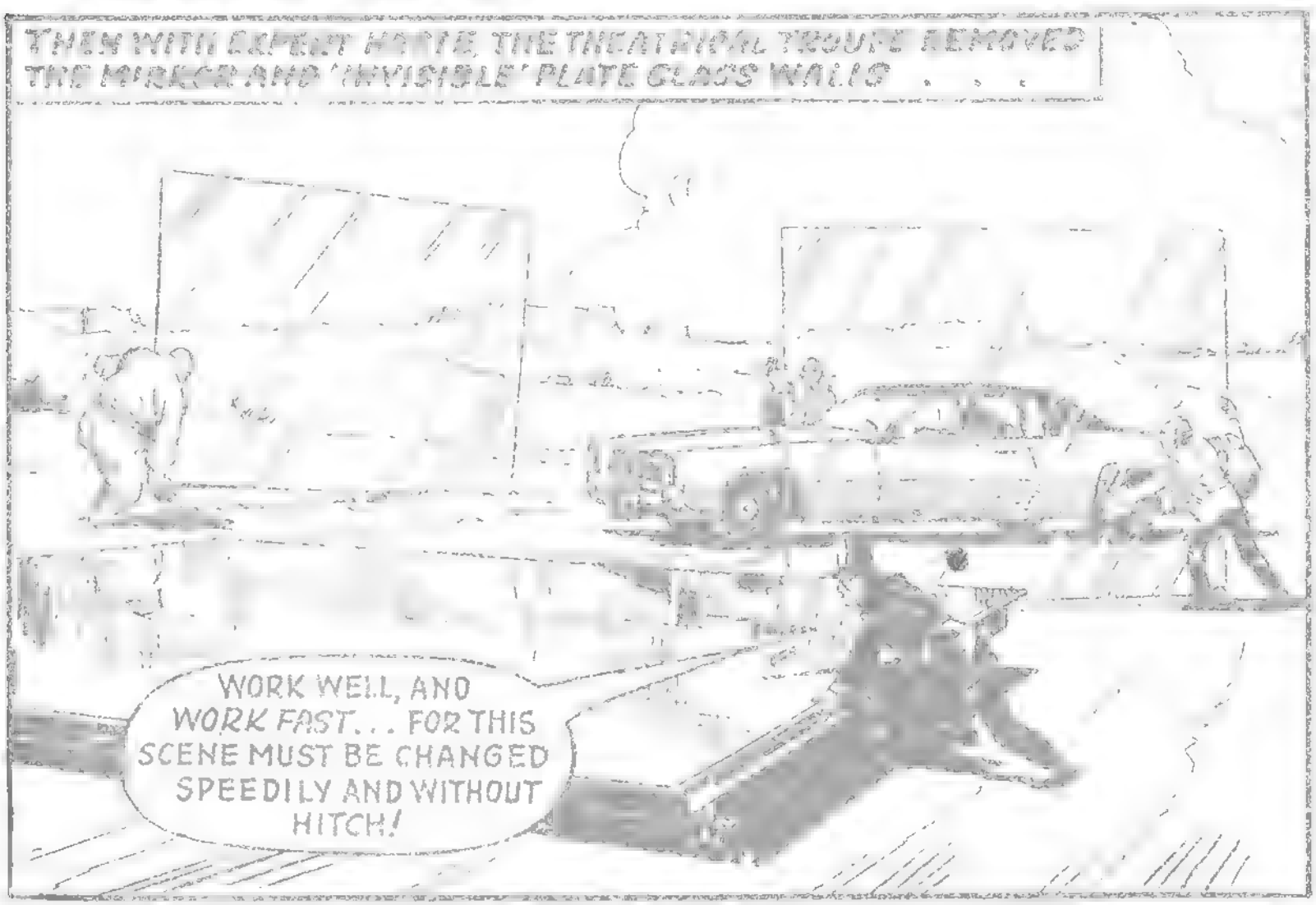
FINALLY HENGIST BRAKED HARD... NOT A SECOND TOO SOON, IT SEEMED!
WE'VE BEEN FOOLED! SOME WISE-GUY'S SET UP A LARGE MIRROR AND TILTED IT TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE THE ROAD WAS RISING UP!
SOME LOUSY TIME TO PLAY A JOKE ... WHAT NUT WOULD PULL A STUNT LIKE THIS?

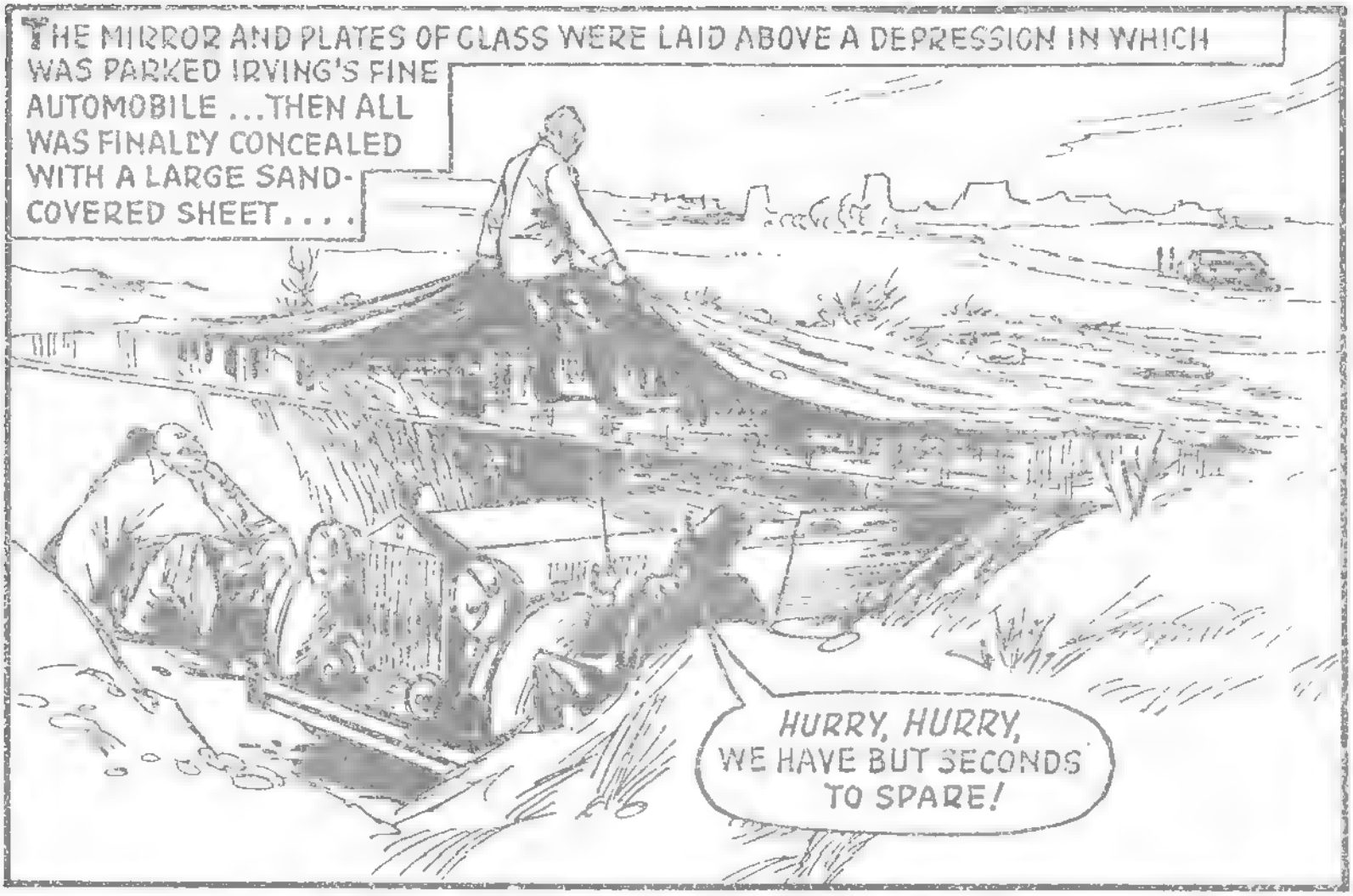

THEN SUDDENLY, A MOCKING VOICE CALLED TO THE BAFFLED BRACE OF BIG-TIME BANDITS!
HERE I SEE A TRAGIC SIGHT FOR ALL HONEST MEN OF TINPAN... THEIR FIRST CITIZEN AND POLICE CHIEF SNEAKING OUT OF TOWN WITH A CONVEYANCE CRAMMED WITH ILL-GOTTEN GAINS!
I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED... THESPIUS! GET HIM, HENGIST!

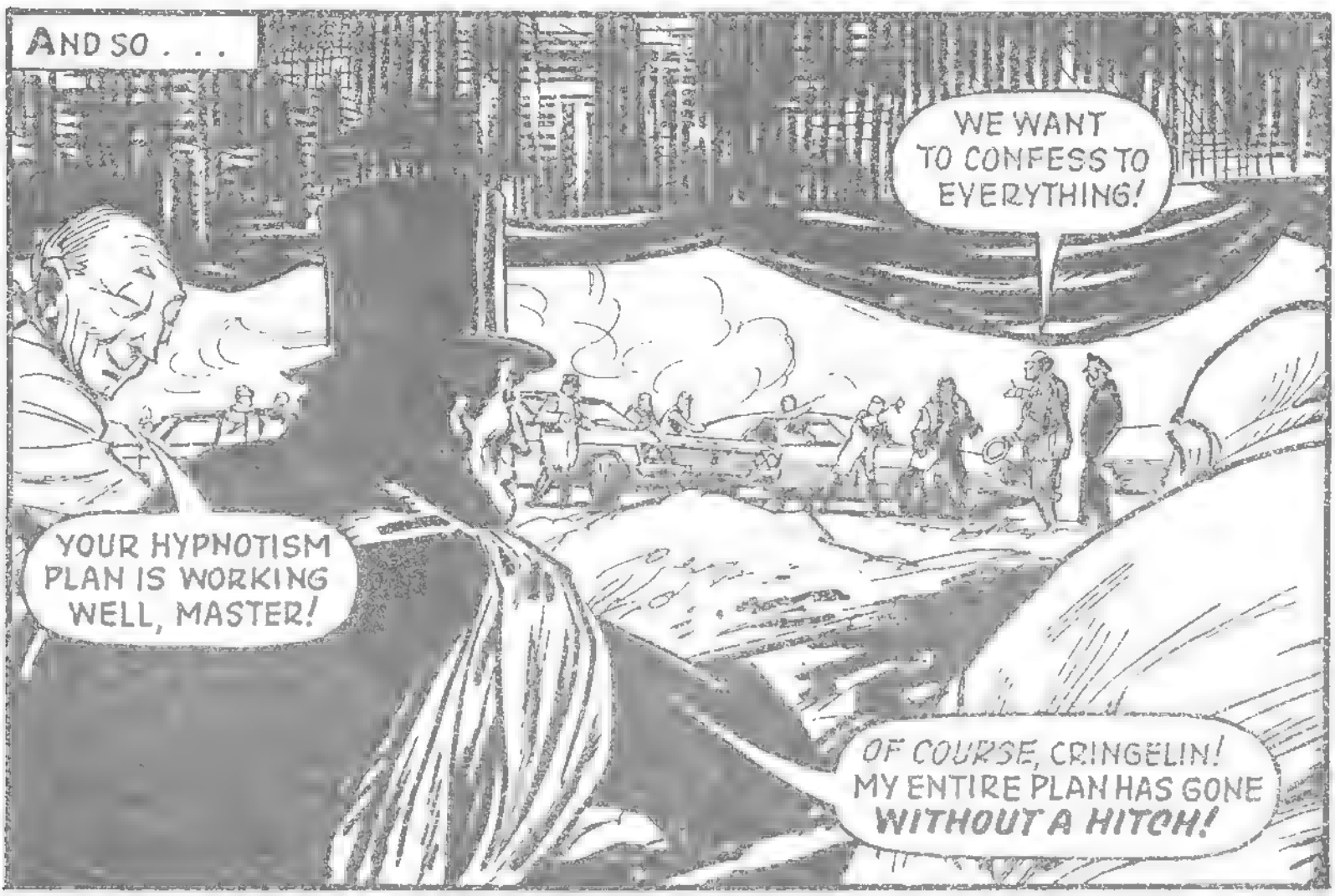
HENGIST RUSHED AT HIS ARCH-ENEMY... BUT WAS SOON STUNNED BY AN IRON-HARD INVISIBLE BLOW!
OOOUCH!

VITCH TURNED AND RAN IN PANIC . . .
RUN IF YOU LIKE, BUT MY INVISIBLE WALLS WILL BAR YOUR WAY!
NNNG!
THE ARMADA OF MAYOR-HUNTING CITIZENS FROM TOWN APPROACHES AT SPEED, MASTER!

THESPIUS ACKNOWLEDGED HIS SERVANT, THEN STOOD SWINGING HIS CANE IN HYPNOTIC MANNER BEFORE THE TWO STUNNED SCOUNDRELS!
WHEN I AND MY FRIENDS HAVE DEPARTED, YOU SHALL FORGET US... BUT YOU SHALL REMAIN, AND CONFESS EVERY EVIL ACT AND DESPICABLE DEED, AND EVERY CALLOUS CRIME FROM PETTY THEFT TO GRAND LARCENY THAT YOU HAVE EVER COMMITTED!


THEN WITH EXPERT HASTE, THE THEATRICAL TROUPE REMOVED THE MIRRORS AND 'INVISIBLE' PLATE GLASS WALLS . . .
WORK WELL, AND WORK FAST... FOR THIS SCENE MUST BE CHANGED SPEEDILY AND WITHOUT HITCH!


THE MIRROR AND PLATES OF GLASS WERE LAID ABOVE A DEPRESSION IN WHICH WAS PARKED IRVING'S FINE AUTOMOBILE ...THEN ALL WAS FINALLY CONCEALED WITH A LARGE SAND-COVERED SHEET....
HURRY, HURRY, WE HAVE BUT SECONDS TO SPARE!


AND SO . . .
WE WANT TO CONFESS TO EVERYTHING!
YOUR HYPNOTISM PLAN IS WORKING WELL, MASTER!
OF COURSE, CRINGELIN! MY ENTIRE PLAN HAS GONE WITHOUT A HITCH!

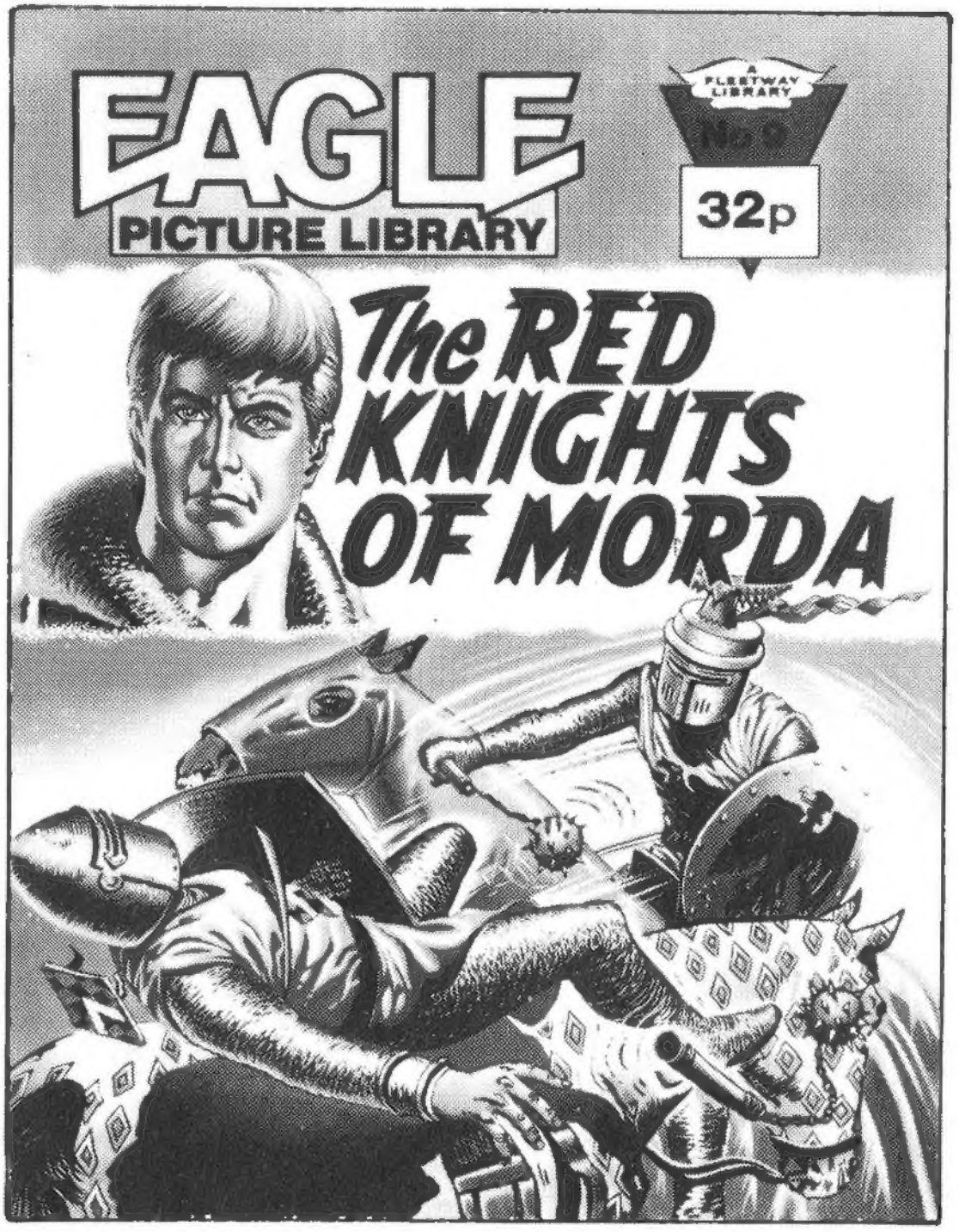
AND SOMETIME LATER . . . AS THESPIUS PASTED THE NEWSPAPER HEADLINES INTO HIS PRECIOUS BOOK OF CUTTINGS . . .
I SUSPECTED ALL ALONG THAT VITCH AND HENGIST WERE UP TO NO GOOD! I SIMPLY TURNED THEIR OWN PLOT AGAINST THEM.... AND COLLECTED A MODEST TWENTY PER CENT OF THE STOLEN CASH AS MY DUE REWARD!
COUNT, CRINGELIN, COUNT!
THESPIUS CLEARED OF CRIME

Scanned by Zeg

Published each month by IPC Magazines Ltd., King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London, SE1 9LS. Printed by Cox & Wyman Ltd., Reading, Berks. Subscription facilities (inland and overseas) are not now available. Sole Agents: Australia and New Zealand, Gordon & Gotch Ltd., South Africa, Central News Agency Ltd. EAGLE PICTURE LIBRARY is sold subject to the following conditions, that it shall not, without the written consent of the Publishers first given, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of Trade except at the full retail price shown on the cover, selling price in Eire subject to VAT; and that it shall not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition, or in any unauthorised cover by way of Trade, or affixed to or as part of any publication or advertising, literary or pictorial matter, whatsoever.

ALSO ON SALE NOW!

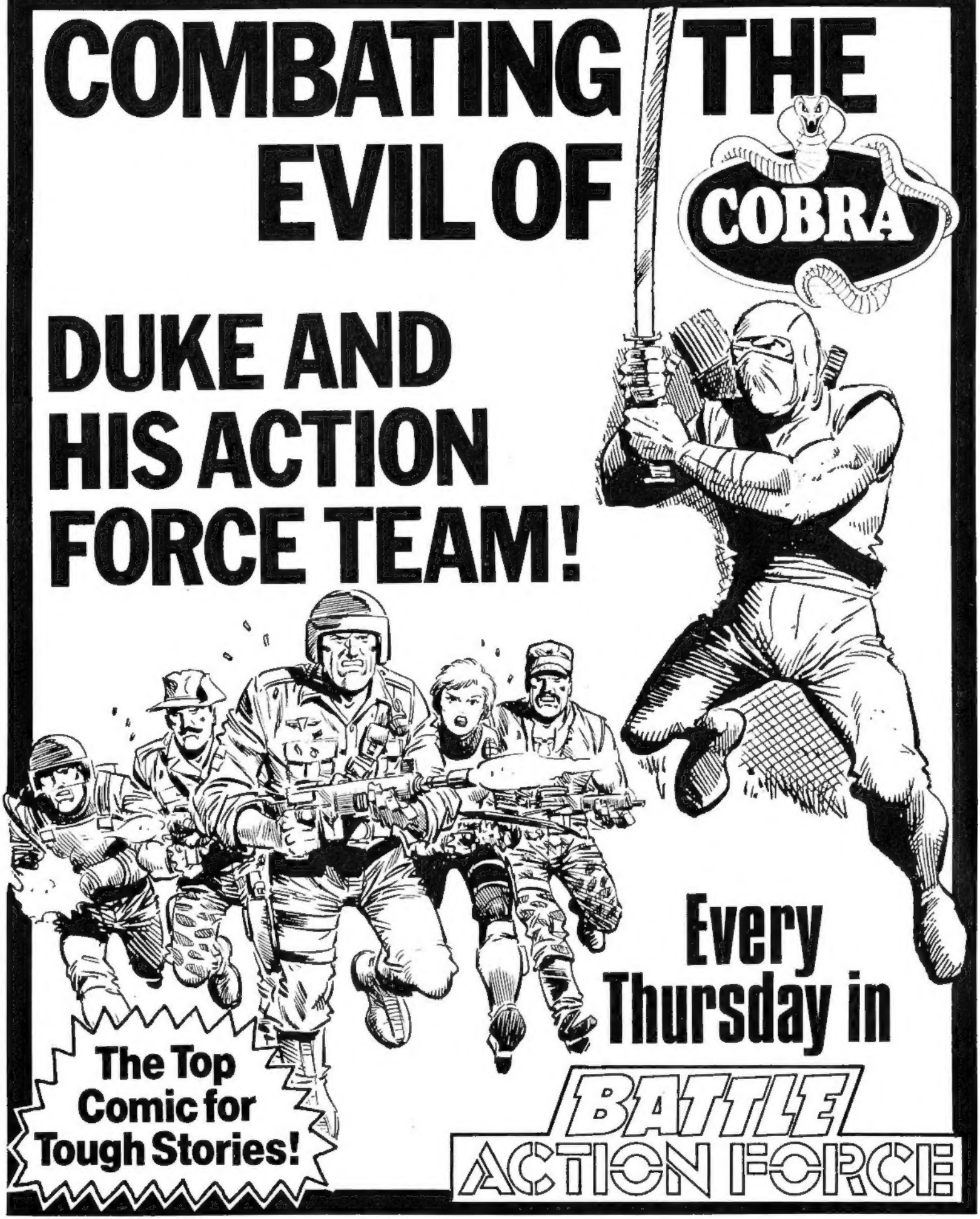
The action-packed companion issue of this great new library.



EAGLE Picture Library is on sale on the first Monday of every month.

COMBATING THE EVIL OF COBRA

DUKE AND HIS ACTION FORCE TEAM!



Every Thursday in

BATTLE ACTION FORCE

The Top Comic for Tough Stories!

SCANNED BY ZEG

SEEK - LOCATE - PRESERVE